

REVIVAL AND RENEWAL OF THE MIND:  
THE LIFE AND THOUGHTS OF CARL F. H. HENRY

A THESIS

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To pursue knowledge for its own sake is vain and unprofitable. To labour for it only to furnish matter of discourse that you may be applauded by others is still worse and argues a vain-glories, weak, and childish temper. Such knowledge puffeth up and is directly opposite to divine charity which alone edifieth, buideth up, or establisheth the soul in all Christian virtues. 'Tis the end that sanctifeth and crowns the work. We must know that we may love; we must love that we may cheerfully obey; and we must obey that may we may please our Lord.

—*Susanna Wesley: the Complete Works*, ed. Charles Wallace Jr.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

During my early spiritual journey, I was cursed by Tertullian's cry, "What has Athens to do with Jerusalem?" At times, I believed the answer was "Nothing!" So in faith, I worshipped God in Jerusalem. On other occasions, my mind informed me that the answer was "Everything!" Thus, I worshipped God in Athens. My journeys between the capitals cities of my heart and mind were frequent and frustrating.

Following my early readings of Paul, Wesley, and Augustine, I promised God and myself that I would find time in my busy, young life to properly address this matter. But as I matured, I discovered that Christ was the perfect answer to life's problems and I almost forgot about the intellectual pursuit of this spiritual question.

As a result when God called me to leave corporate life, attend seminary, and prepare for the ordained ministry, I discovered that my theological foundation was incomplete. By grace, I had the opportunity to study under three men who demonstrated they were denizens of both Athens and Jerusalem. It was impossible to distinguish which venue they inhabited at any given moment because they lived an integrated life-style. They were no longer Gentile or Jew, but thinking and loving sons of the living God.

Each contributed significantly to my theological education. Dr. Tim S. Laniak instilled in me a respect for biblical theology that I was missing. Dr. Garth M. Rosell increased my appreciation for theological history and creedal theology. Dr. Wayne E. Goodwin demonstrated a pastoral theology that included the roles of pastor, preacher, priest and pedagogue. Given their efforts, encouragement, and examples, I acquired a theological foundation that made the preparation of this thesis-project possible.

## **ABSTRACT**

With the mid-twentieth century Great Awakening as the historical context, Carl F. H. Henry's life and thoughts serve as the focal point for an analysis of the relationship of "revival" and "renewal of the mind." The relationship is examined biblically, theologically, and historically. The results are then applied to Henry's life and works for evidence regarding the hypothesis or its proxy that faith and reason are related. It is concluded that the biblical, theological, and historical dimensions of the relationship are coherent and consistent with Henry's life and works. Henry's contribution to the evangelical movement is best understood as redeeming souls and redeeming minds.

## INTRODUCTION

The genesis of this thesis begins at the confluence of two courses—"The History of Evangelical Theology" taught by Dr. Douglas A. Sweeney using the text *The Remaking of Evangelical Theology* by Gary Dorrien, and "Revival and Reform Traditions" taught by Dr. Garth Rosell using his text, *The Surprising Work of God: Harold John Ockenga, Billy Graham and the Rebirth of Evangelicalism*.<sup>1</sup> With regard to the courses and texts, the intersection of interest was the twentieth century theologian, Carl F. H. Henry, who captivated my mind and heart with the magnitude of his person, the intensity of his spirituality, and the majesty of his theology. Thus, it was easy to choose Henry as the subject for this research project. But the development of a suitable research question and working hypothesis proved more elusive. After some reading and reflection, those problems were resolved. The research question is simply stated: what is the relationship between "revival" and "renewal of the mind?" This generated the parallel hypothesis: the relationship between "revival" and "renewal of the mind" can be defined biblically, theologically, and historically.

Immediately, I faced the question, "Where do I begin?" Henry published thirty-seven books, edited an additional eighteen texts, and wrote approximately seven hundred scholarly articles plus a myriad of editorials in his twelve years at *Christianity Today*. In addition, there are more than three hundred articles describing or evaluating Henry's work written by others. But there is one major item missing; to date no biography has

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<sup>1</sup> Gary Dorrien, *The Remaking of Evangelical Theology* (Louisville, KY: Westminster, 1998). Garth M. Rosell, *The Surprising Work of God: Harold John Ockenga, Billy Graham, and the Rebirth of Evangelicalism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008). Dr. Sweeney's course was part of the MDiv program in 2000 and Dr. Rosell's course is part of DMin program at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in Charlotte, NC.

been written. However, Henry wrote an autobiography, *Confessions on a Theologian*, when he was in his early 70s.<sup>2</sup> In reading it, I discovered a series of personal relationships that were significant to Henry. I then read their writings concerning Henry, and, more importantly, gained access to a collection of letters, the Ockenga Papers, maintained at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, that involved several of these relationships. These several sources afforded me a reasonable picture of Henry's life and his values.

With an understanding of Henry's life, relationships, and values, I began to research his thoughts and work. Such represented a Herculean task. I have presented his thoughts from five different professional contexts—Teacher, Philosopher, Author, Pastor, and Theologian—with the unifying principle that his life-purpose remained unchanged in each context. I have tried to organize his major books according to these contexts.

Next, I undertook the detailed biblical, theological, and historical analysis that the research hypothesis required. I found that these diverse analyses yielded a set of coherent conclusions. After considerable reflection, I examined Henry's life and work with these lenses in search of evidence to test the research hypothesis.

Finally, I was able to begin the summing up process. In the process, I decided to listen again to the Memorial Service for Henry celebrated at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. One of the testimonials gave me a fresh insight on how best to understand the remarkable life and work of Carl F. H. Henry, and I have included this in the conclusion. In the final analysis, Henry's life and thoughts demonstrate that “revival” and “renewal of the mind” are richly related.

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<sup>2</sup> Carl F. H. Henry, *Confessions of a Theologian: An Autobiography* (Waco, TX: Word, 1986).

## CHAPTER ONE

### TWO ANTECEDENTS TO CARL HENRY'S LIFE

The 1966 World Congress of Evangelism in Berlin was chaired by Carl Henry. Noting the importance of revival, Henry wrote that the Congress assumes “the Reformation principle of the final authority of the Bible and the apostolic emphasis on the evangelization of mankind as the primary mission of the church.” The Congress represented an effort by many evangelists “to restore the responsibility for revival” to the local church.<sup>1</sup> Several years later in April 1972, Henry, reflecting on his experience in Berlin, wrote Rev. A. J. Dain, the incoming Chair of the International Congress on Evangelism at Lausanne in 1974. Henry described his vision of revival, “The Congress, it seems to me, must say something to the nations, and not simply to individuals in the emptiness of their personal lives.”<sup>2</sup> Henry always acknowledged that the authority for revival was a gift of grace bestowed by the Holy Spirit, because no one becomes an evangelist on the basis of oratorical skills alone.

On another matter Carl Henry wrote, “Human reason is not a source of infallible truth about ultimate reality, since human intelligence is not infinite.” Human reasoning left to itself always reflects human finitude. This is evident when several brilliant minds consider the same data, employ the same rules of logic, but interpret reality in vastly diverse ways, and then explain their conflicting views with compelling force. Yet according to Henry, reason is the only test of truth available to humanity. Truth means nothing more or less than the truth as God knows and reveals it. Thus, the basic

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<sup>1</sup> Carl F.H. Henry, “Good News for a World in Need,” *Christianity Today*, Oct. 14, 1966, 34.

<sup>2</sup> Henry to Dain, April 1972. <http://www2.wheaton.edu/bgc/archives/memorial/carlhenry/henry15.html> [accessed Aug. 2, 2011].



assumption of Evangelical Christianity is that only the living God speaks the truth and can define the role and relationship of reason and revelation. Therefore, he thankfully acknowledged that reason when aided by the presence of the Holy Spirit is able to discern God's truth.<sup>3</sup>

This brief introduction can at best only hint at Henry's high regard for the subjects of "revival" and "reason" and the critical role they occupied in his personal and professional life. A more intriguing dimension of these topics is that despite their seeming divergence, Henry believed that "revival" and "reason" were ultimately related. He wrote that evangelists must do more than crusade for an evangelistic decision, appropriate as that may be, but engage and reform the minds of modern day secularists.<sup>4</sup> This theme of Christian redemption of the soul and redemption of the mind, of saving the souls and minds of the world, was accepted as a shared mission of the church and the university by Henry and others.

Thus, in this first chapter, an analysis of the biblical meaning and possible relationship of "revival" and "mind", or reason, a proxy for mind, is explored. Moreover, an historical study of the theological relationship of revival, or faith, a proxy for revival, and reason is explored. Since Henry was an evangelical theologian who utilized a limited number of presuppositions, concepts that are considered axiomatic to one's thinking or identity, both the biblical and theological material presented here eventually became antecedents to his personal and professional life.

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<sup>3</sup> Carl F.H. Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority* (Waco, TX: Word, 1976), 1:91-95.

<sup>4</sup> Carl F.H. Henry, *Twilight of a Great Civilization* (Westchester, IL: Crossway, 1988), 140.

## A Biblical Antecedent

Several Scriptures should be considered to understand the biblical concepts of “revival” and “mind” and their possible relationship.<sup>5</sup> Scriptures from both Testaments will be examined to obtain a balanced biblical perspective. The study begins with two important Scriptures associated with the concept of revival, Psalms 85:6 and 2 Chronicles 7:14, continues with four critical Scriptures associated with the concept of the mind, Mark 12:30, Romans 12:2, Ephesians 4:22-24, and 2 Corinthians 10:5, and concludes with an interesting Scripture that suggest a possible relationship between revival and the mind, Hebrews 10:16.

The word “revive” and its family of relatives appear more frequently in the Old Testament than the New Testament in all English versions of the Bible. The study, therefore, begins with Psalm 85. The psalmist remembers God’s past mercies—the land God gave to Israel and his forgiveness of their sins. The psalmist begs for God’s favor, hoping His current anger will end. The psalmist’s hope is then stated in Psalm 85:6 NRSV, “Will you not revive us again, so that your people may rejoice in you?”

In this passage, the Hebrew verb, **חַיֶּה**, which means “to live or have life,” is translated as “revive” due to its Hebrew verb stem and is similarly translated elsewhere in the NRSV.<sup>6</sup> In the Septuagint Bible, or LXX, the Greeks later translated this Hebrew verb with the Greek verb, ζῶω, which means “to make alive or to quicken.”<sup>7</sup> Based on

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<sup>5</sup> For the exegetical tasks, lexicons and dictionaries associated with *BibleWorks* were consulted. *BibleWorks*, version 4.0, CD-ROM (Big Fork, MT: Hermeneutika Bible Research Software, 1999).

<sup>6</sup> Francis Brown, S.R. Driver, and Charles Briggs, *Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*, CD-ROM, (Big Fork, MT: Hermeneutika Bible Research Software, 1999), s.v. “חַיֶּה,” piel.

<sup>7</sup> Andrzej Gieniusz, *Septuagint Lexicon Supplement*, CD-ROM, (Big Fork, MT: Hermeneutika Bible Research Software, 1999), s.v. “ζῶω,” future active.

the scriptural context, some preliminary observations with respect to the biblical meaning of “revival” seem apparent. First, life is revived or restored to those who once possessed it. Thus, revival is limited to the once faithful believers. Second, the blessing of revival arises only from the originating source, God. This reflects God’s continual pursuit due to humanity’s predilection to reject Him as a consequence of their sinful nature. These observations are consistent with Kaiser’s comments.<sup>8</sup>

Revival occurs when humanity ceases to reject God and accepts His fellowship. Such is evident in 2 Chronicles 6:18-21 NRSV when Solomon asked God to dwell on earth with Israel, “But will God indeed reside with mortals on earth? Even heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you, how much less this house that I have built...hear the plea of your servant and of your people Israel, when they pray toward this place; may you hear from heaven your dwelling place; hear and forgive.” God answered Solomon in 2 Chronicles 7:14 NRSV, “If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.”

Kaiser notes that the conditions mentioned in 2 Chronicles 7:14 for restoration of God’s favor are generally associated with revivals recorded in the Old Testament—humanity must humble themselves, pray, turn from their wicked ways, and seek God’s face.<sup>9</sup> In this Scripture, the Hebrew verb, פָּנַע, means “to be humble,” but is translated as “to humble oneself” due to its Hebrew verb stem.<sup>10</sup> Correspondingly in the LXX version, the Hebrew text was translated with the Greek verb, ἐντρέπω, which means “to

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<sup>8</sup> Walter C. Kaiser Jr., *Revive Us Again: Biblical Principles for Revival Today* (Scotland: Christian Focus, 2001), 19-30.

<sup>9</sup> Kaiser, *Revive Us Again*, 230.

<sup>10</sup> Brown, *Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew Lexicon*, CD-ROM, s.v. “פָּנַע,” niphāl.

put to shame,” but in its specific verbal form in this passage means “to respect or reverence another.”<sup>11</sup> Here humility denotes a sign of respect before God. In this Scripture, the Hebrew verb, פָּלַל meaning “to intervene or to pray”, is translated as “to intercede or pray” due to Hebrew verb stem.<sup>12</sup> Similarly in the LXX version, the Hebrew text is translated with the Greek verb, προσεύχομαι, meaning “to pray, speak to, or ask God.”<sup>13</sup> In this passage, the Hebrew verb, שׁוּב, means “to turn back or return.”<sup>14</sup> Equivalently in the LXX version, the Greeks translated the Hebrew text using the phrase, ἀποστρέφωσιν ἀπὸ τῶν ὁδῶν αὐτῶν τῶν πονηρῶν, which literally means “turn away from their evil journey.”<sup>15</sup> In this passage, the last Hebrew verb of interest, בָּקַשׁ, means “to seek to find or to seek the face of God.”<sup>16</sup> In a parallel manner, the LXX version employs the Greek verb, ζητέω, meaning “to seek or search for God.”<sup>17</sup>

The Hebrew verbs noted above are plural which suggests that revival is a community experience in addition to an individual event. The Greek verbs noted above are expressed in the subjunctive mood which emphasizes God’s sovereignty and the conditionality of revival. When a community humbles itself before God, offers intercessory prayers, earnestly repents of its sins, and is obedient to God, such constitute the necessary, but not sufficient, grounds for revival. Thus the passage continues, “then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.” Revival is

<sup>11</sup> Henry Liddell and Robert Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, CD-ROM, (Big Fork, MT: Hermeneutika Bible Research Software, 1999), s.v. “ἐντρέπω,” aorist active.

<sup>12</sup> Brown, *Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew Lexicon*, CD-ROM, s.v. “פָּלַל,” hithpael.

<sup>13</sup> Timothy Friberg and Barbara Friberg, *A Greek New Testament Analytical Lexicon*, CD-ROM, (Big Fork, MT: Hermeneutika Bible Research Software, 1999), s.v. “προσεύχομαι,” aorist middle.

<sup>14</sup> Brown, *Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew Lexicon*, CD-ROM, s.v. “שׁוּב,” qal.

<sup>15</sup> Friberg, *Friberg Greek Lexicon*, CD-ROM.

<sup>16</sup> Brown, *Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew Lexicon*, CD-ROM, s.v. “בָּקַשׁ,” piel.

<sup>17</sup> Friberg, *Friberg Greek Lexicon*, CD-ROM, s.v. “ζητέω,” aorist active.

always an act of grace by the sovereign God. If revival is granted, then three divine acts follow. God actively responds to the intercessory prayers of the people, forgives their sins, and heals their nation. Of interest is the Hebrew verb, **נָפַח**, which means “God heals or restores his favor to a nation.”<sup>18</sup> Correspondingly, the Greek verb, **ἰάομαι**, is used in the LXX, meaning “to heal or cure.”<sup>19</sup>

The biblical concept of revival can now be summarized. Despite humanity’s sinful nature, God pursues his people persistently. Aware of their sin, they periodically return to God in humbleness, offer intercessory prayers, repent, and seek to lead obedient lives. God, according to his sovereign will, hears their prayers, forgives their sins and restores His favor. Thus, he delivers their community from the consequence of past sins and evil. The community then enjoys a season of refreshment in their spiritual lives, as their inward lives are revived and renewed by God.

The study continues in the New Testament where the concept of the mind and its function are best defined. In the synoptic Gospels, Jesus said, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.”<sup>20</sup> Two observations follow from this Scripture. First, Jesus commanded humanity to love, meaning worship, serve and obey God with their total being. Second, in order to worship, serve, and obey God, humanity is expected to use their mind accordingly. Henry notes that Jesus’ call for an unreserved human commitment involves the ultimate reasonable judgment.<sup>21</sup> Therefore, the mind and its consequent functions have a spiritual purpose.

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<sup>18</sup> Brown, *Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew Lexicon*, CD-ROM, s.v. “**נָפַח**,” qal.

<sup>19</sup> Friberg, *Friberg Greek Lexicon*, CD-ROM, s.v. “**ἰάομαι**,” future middle.

<sup>20</sup> Mt 22:37, Mk 12:30, and Lk 10:27, NRSV.

<sup>21</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 3:79.

In the Greek New Testament, or GNT, the noun, διάνοια, is translated as mind, meaning thinking and understanding. The Greek noun, διάνοια, is thought to be composed of two words, διά and νοῦς, literally meaning through the mind. Thus, διάνοια describes the functions of the mind.<sup>22</sup>

The Apostle Paul used both διάνοια and νοῦς in his writings to describe different aspects of the mind, though νοῦς was his preference.<sup>23</sup> The word, νοῦς, is translated as mind, but refers to the whole mental and moral being of a person.<sup>24</sup> Thus, νοῦς refers to the mind's nature. This is apparent where Paul uses it to describe the corrupted state of the human mind. For example, Paul writes in 1 Timothy 6:4-5 NRSV, "He is conceited, understanding nothing... wrangling among those who are depraved in mind and bereft of the truth." On the other hand, the word, διάνοια, refers to the mind's function which is evident in its use in Jesus' commandment to love God and neighbor with the mind, meaning through its functions of thinking, understanding, judging, and perceiving.

Paul noted that there is a remedy for the corrupted nature of the mind. He wrote in Romans 12:2 NRSV, "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect." The Greek noun, νοῦς, meaning the mind's nature, is used here. Moreover, the Greek phrase μεταμορφῶσθε τῇ ἀνακαινώσει is rendered as "transformed by the renewing." The Greek verb, μεταμορφόω, means changed outwardly or transformed inwardly and is expressed in the passive voice.<sup>25</sup> Thus, the change is initiated by an outside agency. The final Greek word of the phrase,

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<sup>22</sup> W. Bauer, W. Arndt, and W. Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: Chicago Press: 1979), s.v. "διάνοια."

<sup>23</sup> In the Pauline Epistles, the preference is nineteen to three, as measured by number of verses.

<sup>24</sup> W. Bauer, W. Arndt, and W. Gingrich, *Greek-English Lexicon*, s.v. "νοῦς."

<sup>25</sup> Friberg, *Friberg Greek Lexicon*, CD-ROM, s.v. "μεταμορφόω," imperative passive.

ἀνακαινώσει, alludes figuratively to a spiritual renewal of the mind. Thus, the outside agency is the Holy Spirit and the spiritual transformation occurs with respect to the mind's nature.<sup>26</sup> This is also evident in Ephesians 4:22-24 NRSV, "You were taught to put away your former way of life, your old self, corrupt and deluded by its lusts, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to clothe yourselves with the new self, created according to the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness." In Ephesians 4:23, ἀνανεόω, means to be revived or renewed, and is expressed in the passive voice.<sup>27</sup> The mind is renewed in the likeness of God; it is returned to its original state of righteousness, the *Imago Dei*. Note Romans 12:2 and Ephesians 4:23 are cited by Bauer, Arndt, and Gingrich as examples of νοῦς defining the mind's nature.

The benefits of a renewed mind are explained by Paul, at least in part, in Romans 12:2, "Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will." And this is supplemented in 2 Corinthians 10:5, "We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ." Thus, a believer has the capacity to discern God's will by taking captive disobedient thoughts.

It might be suggested that this analysis is flawed because it joins dissimilar ideas, grafting a New Testament concept of the mind on an Old Testament concept of revival, an artificial splice that produces a synthetic fusion that could be worthless. There is, however, a Scripture that directly links the subject topics and the two Testaments.

Hebrews 10:16 NRSV reads, "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord: I will put my laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their

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<sup>26</sup> Friberg, *Friberg Greek Lexicon*, CD-ROM, s.v. "ἀνακαινώσις."

<sup>27</sup> Friberg, *Friberg Greek Lexicon*, CD-ROM, s.v. "ἀνανεόω," passive infinitive.

minds.” Since this is an Old Testament passage quoted in the New Testament, it appears in the Hebrew Old Testament, Jeremiah 31:33, the Septuagint, Jeremiah 38:33, and the Greek New Testament, Hebrews 10:16. In the GNT, the Greek noun for mind is *διάνοια*, referring to the mind’s functions. In the LXX, the same Greek noun is used. In the Hebrew text, the corresponding noun is, **קֶרֶב**, which means the inner part of human life or the seat of thought and emotion.<sup>28</sup> Thus, the new covenant differs from the old covenant because it will be written on the inner being of the believer, rather than stone. It will be a covenant that shapes the believer’s character, rather than behavior, since it will transform and renew the centers of thinking and emotion, the heart and mind, according to Hebrew tradition. With a renewed heart and mind, obedience will be possible because it arises from an internal desire, rather than an external law.

Concerning this text, Henry commented thusly. Since the law will be internalized, its fulfillment could not be reduced to mere legal conformity. Disobedience would be unthinkable to one on whose heart and mind the law has been etched.<sup>29</sup> Moreover, the central purpose of etching the law on the very nature of humanity is its redemption. The etched law assures humanity that they are children of God, Romans 8:16, members of his family by adoption, Galatians 4:5, Jesus is the Son of God, 1John 5:9, the Bible is the Word of God, Hebrews 4:12, and more.<sup>30</sup>

Three observations now seem apparent. First, understanding the spiritual purpose of the mind was incomplete until the institution of the New Covenant. Second, this analysis is not a joining of dissimilar concepts; rather it proceeded according to the appropriate

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<sup>28</sup> Brown, *Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew Lexicon*, CD-ROM, s.v. “קֶרֶב.”

<sup>29</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 4:524.

<sup>30</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 6:351, 386.



boundaries of the biblical text in order to arrive at its goal.

The third observation represents stating a possible relationship of “revival” and “mind,” as suggested by the assembled biblical material and consequent analysis. Biblically, the human mind has two essential features: its nature and its function. The mind and its functions were originally created in the likeness of God, part of the *Imago Dei* with a spiritual purpose. That purpose includes worship of God, obedience to God, and service in His kingdom. Its nature was corrupted by sin, which in turn caused it to occasionally malfunction, meaning sinfully thinking, perceiving, judging, and understanding. Thus, the faithful were and are periodically drawn away from the presence of God in Christ. Yet because God’s Spirit relentlessly pursues humanity, many eventually return to God, joining with others in humbleness. In community, they offer intercessory prayers, repent of their personal sins, and seek to be obedient to God. Then God, according to His sovereign will, hears their prayers, forgives their sins, and returns His favor to their community. In this way, their community is healed of the consequence of past sins, and individually they enjoy a time of refreshment. Thus, a season of revival begins. During revival, minds are transformed and renewed by the Holy Spirit. Believers are again able to discern God’s will and hold captive thoughts that cause disobedience.

This third observation is not the consequence of modern reflection. Concerning the renewal of the mind in Romans 12:2, Origen (185-285) wrote that some people think they know what God’s will is, but are mistaken. “Those who do not have a renewed mind err and go wrong. It is not every mind, but only one which is renewed and conformed to the image of God which can tell whether what we think, say and do...is the will of God or

not.” And Jerome (347-420) wrote of the same Scripture, “We are not being renewed in our thinking process apart from the renewal of our spirits. Nor are we renewed in our spirits without thinking. We are renewed jointly in the spirit of our mind.”<sup>31</sup> Concerning holding sinful thoughts captive in 2 Corinthians 10:5, Ambrosiaster wrote, “Paul takes an intellect captive when he conquers it just as it is contradicting him by its reasonings, and leads it, humbled and tame, to the Christian faith.” And Basil (330-420) wrote of the same passage, “Certainly, where every height that exalts itself against the knowledge of God is brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ and every disobedience receives just punishment, there nothing is left undestroyed.”<sup>32</sup> Concerning the renewal of the mind in Ephesians 4:23, Origen wrote, “There is a spirit proper to your mind. When your mind is detoxified and expels confusion, the spirit of your mind renews you by dwelling within you.” And Jerome wrote of the same passage, “The renewal of the spirit of our mind means that when the thought is clear and pure... then the spirit is rightly joined to it. They are so coupled as if by cohesive glue that we no longer speak simply of spirit but of the spirit of our mind.”<sup>33</sup> Thus, many of the key elements of this analysis were introduced by the Church Fathers in Rome, Constantinople, and Alexandria around the fifth century.

On the basis of the material presented or derived by way of the brief exegetical examination, the biblical concepts of “revival” and “mind” and their relationship have been introduced. Therefore, summary observations are suggested. First, the Hebrew and Greek analysis of the key words added depth and enriched the biblical meanings of

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<sup>31</sup> Thomas C. Oden, *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture* (Dowers Grove, IL: IVP, 1998), New Testament 6:308.

<sup>32</sup> Oden, *Ancient Christian Commentary*, New Testament 7:284-85.

<sup>33</sup> Oden, *Ancient Christian Commentary*, New Testament 8:173.

“revival” and “mind.” Second, the biblical texts suggested a possible spiritual relationship between “revival” and “mind.” And third, the analysis is consistent with the understanding of the early Church Fathers.

### **A Theological Antecedent**

It is now appropriate to turn to the second antecedent, the theological development of the relationship of revival and the mind, or their proxies faith and reason, that shaped Henry’s theology. In his six volume theological opus, Henry devoted approximately two hundred and fifty pages to the work of four early church theologians—Tertullian, Augustine, Anselm, and Aquinas.<sup>34</sup> He expended a great amount of time and energy comparing and contrasting these diverse thinkers before carefully explaining his preference for one of them.

Tertullian, who lived from 160 to 225, was the first major theologian of the early church. He was born in Carthage and received a classical education, probably in law. Attracted by the discipline of Christians and their willingness to die, he converted to Christianity in his early thirties. He was never ordained to the priesthood and always identified himself as a layman. His writings were extensive and predominantly in Latin; thus, he is known as the “Father of Latin Theology.”

Tertullian is revered because he was the first theologian to use the word, “Trinity,” in his refutation of the modalism heresy. He argued that one God is simultaneously Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and not successively as the heretics held, because God is one substance, but exists in three persons.

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<sup>34</sup> *God, Revelation, and Authority* is discussed extensively in Chapter Four.

But Tertullian is also reviled as a theologian because of two related issues. In his text, *The Prescription Against the Heretics*, Tertullian warned against blending philosophy with Christianity. He was guided by Paul's words in Colossians 2:8 NIV, "See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the principles of this world rather than on Christ." Thus, Tertullian warned,

What indeed has Athens to do with Jerusalem? What concord is there between the Academy and the Church? What between heretics and Christians...Away with all attempts to produce a mottled Christianity of Stoic, Platonic, and dialectic composition. We want no curious disputation after possessing Christ Jesus, no inquisition after enjoying the gospel! With our faith, we desire no further belief. For this is our palmary faith, there is nothing which we ought to believe besides.<sup>35</sup>

Did Tertullian mean that Jerusalem, the city of faith, represented revelation on which Christian Scripture is founded, and Athens, the city of learning, represented reason on which philosophy is founded—two different epistemologies that could not be joined together without an unfortunate result? As for Paul, he was simply opposed to anything that relegated knowledge of, faith in, or relationship with Christ to a secondary position. He believed no special wisdom or knowledge should have preeminence over Christ. But Tertullian, more than asserting the preeminence of faith, was diametrically opposed to the use of reason in spiritual matters.

The second point of ridicule is the phrase, *Credo quia absurdum*, "I believe in the absurd." This phrase is associated with fideism, a system of philosophy which denies reason, but affirms certitude solely on the basis of belief or faith.<sup>36</sup> The phrase is at least

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<sup>35</sup> Tertullian, *The Prescription Against Heretics*, Chapter VII. <http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/ter tullian11.html> [accessed June 4, 2011].

<sup>36</sup> For information concerning fideism, particularly concerning several modern theologians, see the section, "By Faith Alone", in K.D. Boa and R. M. Bowman, *Faith and Reason: Integrative Approaches to Defending the Christian Faith*, 3rd ed. (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2006).

a misreading or misunderstanding of his work, *The Body of Christ*:

*Crucifixus est dei filius; non pudet, quia pudendum est.*

*Et mortuus est dei filius; credibile prorsus est, quia ineptum est.*

*Et sepultus resurrexit; certum est, quia impossibile.*

The Son of God was crucified: I am not ashamed—because it is shameful.

The Son of God died: it is *immediately* credible—because it is silly.

He was buried, and rose again: it is certain—because it is impossible.<sup>37</sup>

Tertullian does not suggest these events are credible because they are absurd, but since the events are absurd, no human mind would conceive them. Yet according to eye witness accounts in Scripture, the events did occur; therefore, God must have been responsible for their occurrence because with God all things are possible. Tertullian is, at the very least, attesting to the divine nature of the events. Tertullian affirms that faith precedes reason and is superior to it. His defense of the primacy of faith caused some latter-day theologians and philosophers to charge him with fideism. His preeminence as a theologian continued until the ascendancy of Augustine.

Augustine, who lived from 354 to 430, was born at Thagaste, a provincial city in Roman North Africa, to a Christian mother and pagan father. He was educated in Carthage to be a teacher of philosophy and rhetoric. Although nurtured in the church, he broke with the Christianity while attending school. Much of his early adult life was spent pursuing a philosophy that he hoped would lead him to truth and happiness. In reality, he followed Manichaeism, a dualistic cult that led him to fleshy pleasures, rather than truth or happiness. When he later accepted a teaching post in Italy, he came under the influence of Ambrose, the Bishop of Milan. In 386, his interest in the cult was waning, and after reading an account of the life of St. Anthony, he converted to Christianity. He left his teaching post, renounced a marriage, and devoted his life to serving God,

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<sup>37</sup> Tertullian, *De Carne Cristi*. [http://www.tertullian.org/works/de\\_carne\\_christi.htm](http://www.tertullian.org/works/de_carne_christi.htm) [accessed June 2, 2011].

following the practices of a priest, including celibacy. Augustine returned to Thagaste in 388 and lived a monastic life. He was ordained a priest in 391 at Hippo, became Bishop Coadjutor, and served as Bishop there until his death.

Two major theological conflicts ultimately shaped his reputation as a scholar and theologian. The initial conflict occurred during the period 393 to 412 when he was involved in a bitter controversy with the Donatists. This schismatic movement began earlier in the fourth century with the disputed election of a bishop to the see of Carthage, and it threatened the unity of the Church in North Africa. Its name was taken from the election of a subsequent bishop, Donatus. The Donatists held that a sacrament was invalid if administered by a bishop who cooperated with a pagan emperor, or who had been consecrated by such a bishop. If true, some prior baptisms and ordinations would be declared invalid. Augustine countered the claim of the Donatists on several grounds. First, Catholicism demands universality based upon God's promise to Abraham. Second, the purity of the sacraments is guaranteed by their originator, Jesus Christ. Third, sacraments are valid when administered within the church, even if by heretics. Fourth, salvation outside the Church is impossible. This logic preserved Church unity, but not without some acrimony.<sup>38</sup>

The second conflict occurred from 410 to 430 and is known as Pelagianism. Pelagius was a British monk who lived in Rome and taught that it was possible for humanity to be sinless without God's grace. He fled to North Africa during the sack of Rome by the Visigoths in 410. Under the pressure of unrelenting debate, this controversy again threatened to divide the church. Augustine perfected his theology of original sin, grace, and predestination to meet the challenge posed by Pelagianism.

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<sup>38</sup> A.D. Fitzgerald, ed., *Augustine through the Ages* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999), 281-86.

According to Augustine, original sin was an act of disobedience by Adam, and was transmitted to successive generations through “impure sexual intercourse.” Such corrupts human nature and provides a continuing source of guilt. Then, corrupted human nature injures human freewill. God’s grace is required to liberate freewill from its enslavement to sin. Following liberation, humanity must cooperate with God’s grace so that God may act through them to achieve His best for them. Lastly, based upon God’s foreknowledge, He predestines or elects only those who choose to use their free will to cooperate with His grace. This summary outlines Augustine’s argument that defeated Pelagianism. Church unity was preserved, and Augustine was accorded accolades for his effort.<sup>39</sup>

Augustine accepted Scripture as the Word of God, but in his explanation of Scripture he occasionally resorted to philosophy to clarify or support its meaning. Whereas Tertullian emphasized the primacy and completeness of faith to understanding, Augustine emphasized the priority of faith with understanding following through the assistance of reason. Augustine’s priority of faith with understanding then following when aided by reason is best illustrated by his words:

Dost thou wish to understand? Believe. For God has said by the prophet: “Except ye believe, ye shall not understand.” Isa. vii. 9...and I gave this counsel: If thou hast not understood, said I, believe. For understanding is the reward of faith. Therefore do not seek to understand in order to believe, but believe that thou mayest understand; since, “except ye believe, ye shall not understand.”<sup>40</sup>

To later generations, Augustine is best known for his three classic texts, *Confessions*, *City of God*, and *On the Trinity*.<sup>41</sup> Augustine was named “Doctor of the Church,” but his influence extends beyond the Orthodox Catholic Church to all of Christendom. There are

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<sup>39</sup> Fitzgerald, *Augustine through the Ages*, 633-39.

<sup>40</sup> Augustine, *Homilies on the Gospel of John*, Chapter VII.14-18. <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf107.iii.xxx.htm> [accessed June 8, 2011].

<sup>41</sup> *Confessions*, trans. Henry Chadwick (USA: Oxford, 2009); *City of God*, trans. Marcus Dods (New York: Modern Library, 1994); *The Trinity*, ed. J.E. Rotelli (USA: New City Press, 2008).

few theologians or philosophers born after him who have not been influenced by his thinking, or had their thoughts measured against his.

Anselm, who lived from 1033 to 1109, was a Benedictine theologian and greatly influenced by Augustine's thinking. He is often called "the second Augustine," and provided "justifying reasons" for the faith and hope that was in him, citing 1 Peter 3:15. He sometimes argued without benefit of extensive scriptural citations. When challenged, he responded that he proceeded as Augustine had done, but more briefly. His Augustinianism is clearly evident in his motto, *Credo ut intelligam*, or "I believe in order to understand," which is based on his text, *Proslogium*:

Lord, I acknowledge and I thank you that you have created me in this your image, in order that I may be mindful of you, may conceive of you, and love you; but that image has been so consumed and wasted away by vices, and obscured by the smoke of wrong-doing, that it cannot achieve that for which it was made, except you renew it, and create it anew. I do not endeavor, O Lord, to penetrate your sublimity, for in no wise do I compare my understanding with that; but I long to understand in some degree your truth, which my heart believes and loves. For I do not seek to understand that I may believe, but I believe in order to understand. For this also I believe, that unless I believed, I should not understand.<sup>42</sup>

Anselm did not believe that humanity could understand the mysteries of faith, but he was confident that reasons for their necessity could be given.

Thomas Aquinas, who lived from 1225 to 1274, was born in Italy near Naples. He was the youngest son of a wealthy aristocrat. At age five, he entered a Benedictine Abbey at Monte Cassino with the family's hope that he would eventually become an abbot. But after attending university, he joined the Dominican Order and was sent to Paris. He enrolled in a Master's Degree program and studied under Albertus Magnus, the great German theologian of the Middle Ages. He later earned a Doctor of Theology in

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<sup>42</sup> Anselm, *Proslogium*, Chapter One. <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/anselm-proslogium.html> [accessed June 9, 2011].



1256. Thereafter, Aquinas taught theology at the university, while preaching daily.

Aquinas wrote two major texts—*Summa contra Gentiles*, an apologetic work intended to assist Dominicans missionaries in evangelistic ministries with non-Christians, and *Summa Theologica*, a massive work intended for Dominicans without access to a university education.<sup>43</sup> His system of theology is referred to as Thomistic because it represents a personal synthesis of Aristotelian philosophy and Christian theology. He believed that Divine truth is knowable through natural revelation, reason, and supernatural revelation, faith. Philosophical knowledge begins with the senses and the natural world. On the other hand, certain truths, such as the virgin birth and the Trinity, are only knowable through the supernatural revelation of Scripture and Tradition. Reason could not discern such mysteries unaided without error. Since reason had the responsibility to prepare the mind to receive faith, it enjoyed a priority at least equal to faith. This change of priority, compared to Augustine and Anselm, led to a new motto, *Intelligo ut credam* or “I understand in order to believe.”

Three theological alternatives concerning the relationship of faith and reason were developed. The Tertullian approach assumes faith is primary and sufficient. It is apart from reason, because faith is sufficient and beyond reason. The adherent of the Tertullian approach proclaims *Credo quia absurdum*, or “I believe in the absurd.” At the other polarity is the Thomistic approach that asserts reason is primary because it can discern natural revelation and prepare the mind to accept the supernatural revelation of faith. Reason is required to complete faith. The adherent of Thomism proclaims *Intelligo ut credam*, or “I understand in order to believe.” Between these two divergent extremes,

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<sup>43</sup> The complete four volume set of *Summa Contra Gentiles* is available at <http://www.logos.com/product/5206/summa-contra-gentiles> [accessed July 27, 2011]. The complete five volume set is currently in print: *Summa Theologica* (Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1981).

the Augustinian-Anselmian approach exists. It acknowledges, as Tertullian did, the priority of faith. Yet it acknowledges the Thomistic view that reason assists faith with understanding, that with reason, understanding can be nurtured and completed. Thus, the adherent of the Augustinian-Anselmian tradition proclaims *Credo ut intelligam*, or “I believe in order to understand.”

The Tertullian approach has been largely discounted by the Church, with the exception of certain theologians, such as Soren Kierkegaard, the Christian theologian who influenced Barth and the neo-orthodox school of theology. Thomistic theology was adopted by the Council of Trent as the official view of the Roman Catholic Church in the sixteenth century. Aquinas was named “Doctor of the Church” by Pius V in 1567. In 1867 at Vatican I, faith, reason, and their relationship were described in *De Filius* which was merely a summary of Thomistic theology.<sup>44</sup>

Nevertheless, the leaders of the Reformation preferred the Augustinian-Anselmian tradition, particularly Calvin and Luther. While they agreed to the presence of general or natural revelation, they held that such could not lead to personal salvation. Moreover, they could not accept that the intellect and its ability to reason were uncorrupted by sin. Hence, faith was required for personal salvation. They believed, once saved, reason was enhanced by the presence of the Holy Spirit. Such views were consistent with the Augustinian-Anselmian tradition. Thus Catholicism and Protestantism held differing views of the relationship of faith and reason. The following demonstrates that a difference existed which could be significant:

There are some intelligible truths to which the efficacy of [reason] extends, such as the principles which a man naturally knows and the things which are deduced from

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<sup>44</sup> See Chapters 3 and 4 of *De Filius* at <http://www.ewtn.com/library/COUNCILS/V1.HTM> [accessed July 26, 2011].

them, and for knowledge of these no new intelligible light is required, but the naturally inborn light suffices. But there are things to which these principles do not extend, such as what pertains to faith and exceeds the capacity of reason... The human mind cannot know these unless it is illumined by a new light superadded to the natural.<sup>45</sup>

The Protestant tradition took root in America in seventeenth century, and the struggle between faith and reason continued there. Charles Chauncey, a congregational Old Light from New England, commented on the merit of reason after the Holy Spirit corrected its corrupted nature:

The working of the Spirit is according to the Nature of Man, moves not in Contradiction to, but in an Elevation of Reason. He doth not extinguish Reason, the Candle of the LORD, but snuffs it and adds more Light, reduces it to its proper Manner of Operation, and sets it in its right State towards GOD, brings first Light into the Understanding and new Motions into the Will: He doth not dethrone Reason and Judgment, but applies it to its proper Work, repairs it, sets it in its true Motion.<sup>46</sup>

While Chauncey was more concerned about reason in its struggle with various “enthusiasms,” it appears that he held an Augustinian view of the relation of faith, reason, and understanding. Reason is not diminished by faith he notes, but repaired, elevated, and set on its true course to do its work. Thus, faith increases understanding.

John Wesley influenced public opinion on this topic on both sides of the Atlantic. In a pamphlet written in 1744, *An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion*, Wesley urged the use of reason by all to broaden their relationship with God:

There are many that utterly decry the use of reason... in religion; nay, that condemn all reasoning concerning the things of God, as utterly destructive of true religion. We can in nowise agree with this. We find no authority for it in holy writ.... We therefore not only allow, but earnestly exhort, all who seek after true religion, to use all the reason which God hath given them, in searching out the things of God.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Theology, Faith, and Reason: On Boethius' "On the Trinity"*. <http://quadri.wordpress.com/2008/02/29/faith-and-reason-part-2> [accessed June 11, 2011].

<sup>46</sup> Charles Chauncey, *Seasonable Thoughts about the State of Religion* (UK: Rogers and Fowle, 1743), 112. [http://openlibrary.org/books/OL14041348M/Seasonable\\_thoughts\\_on\\_the\\_state\\_of\\_religion\\_in\\_New\\_England](http://openlibrary.org/books/OL14041348M/Seasonable_thoughts_on_the_state_of_religion_in_New_England) [accessed June 11, 2011].

<sup>47</sup> Thomas Jackson, *The Works of John Wesley*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. CD-ROM (Franklin, TN: Providence House, 1995), vol. 8, 11.

In a letter to a friend, who had abstained from the use of reason in spiritual matters, Wesley wrote, "I am for faith to perfect my reason, that by the Spirit of God not putting out the eyes of my understanding, but enlightening them more and more, I may 'be ready to give' a clear scriptural 'answer to every man that asketh' me 'a reason of the hope that is in' me."<sup>48</sup> Here Wesley expressed the Augustinian view that through faith the Holy Spirit enlightens reason resulting in greater understanding. In a 1781 sermon, *The Case of Reason Impartially Considered*, Wesley declared, "By the due use of reason we come to know what are the tempers implied in inward holiness; and what it is to be outwardly holiness."<sup>49</sup> Thus, through enlightened reason, humanity discerns the mind of Christ, and that which is required to walk as Christ wills.

This suggests that the Augustinian-Anselmian view was generally prevalent in American Protestantism in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Charles Hodge, B.B. Warfield, and J. Gresham Machen carried forth the same view at leading seminaries and churches in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>50</sup>

As for the late twentieth and early twenty-first century, the writings of Henry's colleagues and contemporaries generally bear witness to the same result. E.J. Carnell was a fellow theologian and professor at Fuller Seminary with Henry. Carnell wrote that "My heart can not believe what my mind rejects as false." He commented that faith is

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<sup>48</sup> Jackson, *The Works of John Wesley*, vol. 2, 217.

<sup>49</sup> Jackson, *The Works of John Wesley*, vol. 6, 355-56.

<sup>50</sup> Hodge wrote, "Christianity is equally opposed to superstition and rationalism. The one is faith without evidence, the other refuses to believe...inspite of evidence." See *Systematic Theology*, vol.1 (NY: Scribner, 1873); Warfield wrote, "Faith is the gift of God; but it does not in the least follow that the faith God gives is an irrational faith, that is, a faith without cognizable grounds in right reason." See F. Zaspel, *The Theology of B.B. Warfield: a Systematic Summary* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 72; Machen wrote, "What the Spirit does in new birth is not to make a man a Christian regardless of the evidence, but on the contrary to clear away the mists from his eyes and enable him to attend to the evidence." See *The Christian Faith in the Modern World* (Grand Rapids, MI: Erdmann, 1947), 63.

“the resting place of the soul in a sufficiency of the evidence.” Yet noting that he was “not exchanging reason for faith, as did Thomas,” rather he was strengthening his present faith, “for faith is the resting place of the heart in the worthiness of the evidence.”<sup>51</sup> Carnell’s words suggest that faith ultimately must find rest in both the heart and mind. Such is possible when the evidence is equally sufficient and worthy; thus, permitting faith and reason to coexist in harmony, just as Augustine noted. Os Guinness, a younger contemporary of Henry, wrote, “Christianity invites people to an examined faith. Although a Christian should believe simply, he should not “simply believe.”<sup>52</sup> Guinness’ comment reminds the Christian of Socrates’ mandate, “An unexamined life is not worth living.” An unexamined faith is not worthy of belief. Reason is God’s gift to humanity that not only permits, but facilitates, examination of faith when aided by the presence of the Holy Spirit. The result is a faith that is able to withstand the stress of human existence. Paul advised the church in 2 Corinthians 13:5 NIV, “Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves.”

Based on the information compiled in this concluding section of Chapter One, several observations are offered. First, the Church grappled with three views of the relationship of faith and reason for about fifteen hundred years. The Tertullian approach was quickly dismissed; the Thomistic approach was adopted by the Roman Catholic Church; and the Augustinian-Anselmian approach was adopted by most of the Protestant reformers. Second, following the Reformation, the Augustinian-Anselmian approach was planted and taught within the American Protestant tradition without significant alteration.

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<sup>51</sup> Edward Carnell, *An Introduction to Christian Apologetics* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1952), 7, 82, 175.

<sup>52</sup> Os Guinness, *In Two Minds: The Dilemma of Doubt* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1976), 31.

Henry carefully revealed his preference and support for his choice. He acknowledged that Christianity requires belief in what to the unregenerate mind seems absurd; thus Tertullian has a point. Yet, to simply announce a conclusion without first subjecting it to a rational test seemed intellectually irresponsible to Henry.<sup>53</sup> Aquinas's arguments for the existence of God "rest on an appeal to sense observation without reliance on divine disclosure."<sup>54</sup> Because Henry believed that God conveys his truth by revelation, he rejected the Thomistic approach. With regard to the Augustinian-Anselmian approach, Henry noted, "The revelation of the living God is the precondition for human understanding; it supplies the framework and the corrective for rational reason."<sup>55</sup> Finally summing up the important relationship of revelation and reason, Henry noted, "I believe in order to understand" assumes the content of both general and special revelation through which God confronts humanity, even during periods of spiritual rebellion, and calls them to faith.<sup>56</sup> Thus, Henry favored the Augustinian-Anselmian approach as the only appropriate explanation of the relationship of faith and reason.

Henry suspected that the mission of the church and the university were at least parallel, if not coincident. Thus, saving souls and saving minds became a theme united by revival and renewal of the mind. Thus, the biblical and theological antecedents presented in this Chapter were vital to his life.

In Chapter Two, the historical context of the American Protestant Church from the mid-nineteenth to mid-twentieth century is considered. This describes the emerging theological and ecclesiastical forces that Henry encountered in his professional and

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<sup>53</sup> Carl F.H. Henry, *Toward a Recovery of Christian Belief* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1990), 38.

<sup>54</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 1:184.

<sup>55</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 1:1, 183.

<sup>56</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 1:1, 297.

personal life. Chapters Three and Four will then discuss his personal and professional responses to them.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF CARL HENRY'S LIFE

#### The Setting: 1850

##### *Awakenings and Revivals*

In Chapter One, the Old Testament concept of revival was introduced. The New Testament church also began with revival at Pentecost, when the Apostles prayed, the Holy Spirit appeared, and three thousand believers were added to the new church. The Pentecost revival soon spread as the Apostles went into Judea and Samaria.

Modern revivals seem to parallel the biblical concept introduced in Chapter One. Packer defines revival as “God’s quickening visitation of his people, touching their hearts and deepening his work of grace in their lives. It is a corporate experience that enlivens individuals.” Orr describes a revival as a renewal of life among the faithful. Davies suggests that revival is a “sovereign outpouring of the Holy Spirit” on Christians resulting in the quickening of their “spiritual concern for others” and extending “the influence of the Kingdom of God in their society and the more remote parts of the world.”<sup>1</sup> Perhaps the most succinct definition is offered by Lovelace, “Revivals are broad-scale movements of the Holy Spirit that renew the spiritual vitality of the church and foster its expansion in mission and evangelism.”<sup>2</sup>

Church historians would contend that the Pentecost revival of the New Testament became an awakening when Paul journeyed to the Gentile nations and the other Apostles

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<sup>1</sup> R. E. Davies, *I Will Pour Out My Spirit* (Kent, England: Monarch, 1992), 15-18.

<sup>2</sup> Richard F. Lovelace, *Dynamics of Spiritual Life* (Dowers Grove, IL: IVP, 1978), 21-22.



journeyed to the ends of the earth as Jesus had commanded. Garth Rosell, while noting that revivals are initiated by God, renew the spiritual vitality of his people, and produce more love for God's Son and his people, emphasizes a critical dimension that facilitates differentiation by scale. Revivals occur in a church, community, denomination, or region of a nation over a limited time span; while an awakening involves a larger geographic area, such as several regions, or a nation, or several nations, and its duration may run several decades. Thus, an awakening and revival differ only by scale. For this reason, awakenings often bear the title, "Great Awakening."<sup>3</sup>

The above definitions demonstrate that the modern understanding of revivals and awakenings do not materially depart from the biblical concept of revival. In this Chapter, several Great Awakenings will be discussed.

### *Evangelicalism*

The most popular definition of evangelicalism is offered by Bebbington who wrote that evangelicalism has four essential characteristics—(1) biblicism which is a belief that the Bible contains all necessary truth for salvation, (2) conversionism which is a belief that lives must change and such change is accomplished only by faith in Christ, (3) crucicentrisim which is a belief that Christ's cross is the central event since only it provides atonement and reconciliation for humanity's sins, and (4) activism which is humanity's joyful response expressed in service, evangelism, and mission.<sup>4</sup>

McGrath suggests a six-part definition of evangelicalism: (1) the Bible is the authoritative source of truth about God and guide to Christian living, (2) Jesus Christ is incarnate God and Savior of sinful humanity, (3) the Lordship of the Holy Spirit, (4) the

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<sup>3</sup> Dr. Garth Rosell, "Revivals and Awakenings" (Lecture, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, Charlotte, NC, 4/27/2009).

<sup>4</sup> David W. Bebbington, *The Dominance of Evangelicalism* (Dowers Grove, IL: IVP, 2005), 23-40.

need for personal conversion, (5) the priority of evangelism for the individual and the church, and (6) the priority of the church for fellowship, nourishment, and growth.<sup>5</sup>

Sweeney employs a short definition that requires a lengthy explanation: evangelicals are a movement of orthodox Protestants whose beliefs adhere to the Protestant Reformation and whose practices are shaped by the revivals of the Great Awakenings. Evangelicals constitute a movement, not a denomination or an affiliation, who work together in pursuit of common, but ever-changing, goals. Participation is voluntary and self-selected, with few able to support the entire evangelical agenda. Evangelicals are orthodox, meaning right doctrine leads to right belief and right worship. This can produce painful disputes at times, but it is thought that the absence of correct doctrine leads to far worse spiritual consequences. By the Reformation principles, all agree: (1) right doctrine begins with Scripture, *sola Scriptura*, and (2) humanity is saved by grace, *sola gratia*, through faith, *sola fide*, in Christ alone, *solus Christus*. As a consequence of the Great Awakenings, evangelicals subscribe to renewal and revival, and seek to spread the Gospel message near and far.<sup>6</sup> All three definitions share considerable common theological ground via the Reformation, despite their differing vocabularies.

By combing the terms “evangelical” and “awakening,” the historical context of mid-twentieth century Protestant America can be understood, the context in which Carl Henry, the leading voice of the evangelical faith lived and worked. But to comprehend the conflicts and confluence of forces in that context, it will be necessary to begin almost a century earlier in 1850.

### *Great Awakenings I and II*

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<sup>5</sup> A. McGrath, *Evangelicalism and the Future of Christianity* (Dowers Grove, IL: IVP, 1995), 55-56.

<sup>6</sup> D. A. Sweeney, *The American Evangelical Story* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2005), 23-25.

By 1850, America had already experienced two evangelical awakenings. The First Great Awakening began in the late 1720s with the ministry of Theodore Frelinghuysen in New Jersey through his preaching in the Dutch Reformed community. It continued with the Tennent brothers, Gilbert and William, and the early Presbyterian church in the mid-Atlantic colonies. By the 1730s and early 40s, the movement was led by Jonathan Edwards of the Congregational church in Massachusetts and the English revivalist George Whitefield who preached in America. Eventually, all thirteen British colonies from Georgia to Vermont were swept by the religious fervor of the First Great Awakening. The Second Great Awakening began in 1800 on the western frontier of the now newly independent American nation in the Scottish Presbyterian revival camp meetings of Kentucky and Tennessee. By way of Baptists and Methodists, it spread into the South. Timothy Dwight, the grandson of Jonathan Edwards, kept the fires of revivalism burning in New England in the early 1820s. Late in the 1820s, Charles Finney, the Father of Modern Revivalism, began preaching in the “Burnt-over-District” of upstate New York, and became the leading evangelist of the awakening in the 1830s. Ultimately, the Second Great Awakening captured the hearts of most of America.

The first two Great Awakenings produced significant changes in American Protestantism. First and most important, the awakenings promoted a transdenominational movement that eventually resulted in the disestablishment of the “state” and “English” churches, and the development of evangelical denominations in America. Between 1800 and 1850, membership in the Congregational, Presbyterian, and Anglican churches declined substantially, while the reverse was true for the Baptist and Methodist churches.<sup>7</sup> In addition, new denominations sprouted, such as the Adventist churches, Churches of

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<sup>7</sup> Sweeney, *American Evangelical Story*, 61-62.

Christ, and Disciples of Christ, while aggregate church membership soared. Second, with respect to membership growth, new approaches were widely accepted. The Church increased through revivals, mass advertising, public prayer meetings, and excitement intended to change worship from a largely intellectual listening experience to one that involved the participation of the mind and emotion.<sup>8</sup> Third, the church was committed to an agenda that included elements of the Social Gospel. Most churches held Sunday school, had educational societies, formed colleges and seminaries, and published books and tracts. Asylums for the disabled and mentally ill were founded, temperance societies were established, and abolitionist causes were sponsored by churches. Many believed that such social work would ultimately usher in the great millennial age.<sup>9</sup>

As a result of these several consequences, the evangelical movement dominated Protestantism in the mid eighteenth century, and evangelical churches entered the mainstream of America. Thus Martin Marty noted that evangelical values also dominated American culture, since they were distributed through a network of circuit riders, revivalists, lay leaders, and stable clergymen, and evangelical literature had a monopoly in many areas, particularly school textbooks.<sup>10</sup>

### **From Prayers to Awakening: 1857 to 1870**

Jeremiah Lamphier, a quiet businessman of middle age, was appointed by the North Church of the Dutch Reformed denomination as a missionary to New York City in 1857. The City was suffering under the weight of a national financial crisis; some banks had

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<sup>8</sup> Sweeney, *American Evangelical Story*, 68-69.

<sup>9</sup> Sweeney, *American Evangelical Story*, 74-75.

<sup>10</sup> M.E. Marty, *Righteous Empire: The Protestant Experience in America* (New York: Dial, 1970), 102.

failed, a few factories were closed, and unemployment had increased. In addition, the wealthy were relocating from down town to more desirable residential areas in the City. Consequently, attendance at North Church was in decline. In September 1857, Lamphier distributed a notice that announced a weekly noonday prayer meeting.

***How Often Shall I Pray?***

As often as the language of prayer is in my heart; as often as I see my need of help; as often as I feel the power of temptation; as often as I am made sensible of any spiritual declension or feel the aggression of a worldly spirit. In prayer we leave the business of time for that of eternity, and intercourse with men for intercourse with God.

A day Prayer Meeting is held every Wednesday, from 12 to 1 o'clock, in the Consistory building in the rear of the North Dutch Church, corner of Fulton and William Streets (entrance from Fulton and Ann Streets). This meeting is intended to give merchants, mechanics, clerks, strangers, and business men generally an opportunity to stop and call upon God amid the perplexities incident to their respective avocations. It will continue for one hour; but it is also designed for those who may find it inconvenient to remain no more than five or ten minutes, as well as for those who can spare the whole hour.

**Figure 1. Lamphier's Notice.**

*Source:* Jeremiah Lamphier, "How Often Shall I Pray?" [http://pietist.blogspot.com/2007/05/john-piper-on-jeremiah lanphier.html](http://pietist.blogspot.com/2007/05/john-piper-on-jeremiah-lanphier.html) [accessed July 22, 2011].

The initial meeting attracted six businessmen. But by the spring of 1858, ten thousand New York City businessmen were meeting daily in one hundred dispersed groups. Concurrently, similar prayer groups emerged in Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, and Boston. In Chicago, a group of two thousand met daily in a local theatre. The pattern of the prayer meeting was simple and nearly identical in every city. While clergy attended, lay people provided leadership. Any person, male or female, might pray, give testimony

or exhortation, or lead a song as led by the Spirit. Meetings always began and ended punctually. The enthusiasm of the prayers of the people continued to spread until the nation found itself in the midst of another awakening, Great Awakening III.

This awakening was noted by the press for its quiet orderliness. What impressed observers was that there was no fanaticism, hysteria, or odd behavior, only a strong impulse to pray. Little preaching was done. As the people gathered they were generally silent; there was an attitude to glorify God. In February 1858, James Bennett, publisher of the *New York Herald*, began to give extensive space to the awakening in his paper. Not to be outdone, Horace Greeley, editor of the *New York Tribune*, gave still greater coverage to the meetings, even devoting an entire edition to it. Other papers throughout the nation quickly followed in reporting attendance at prayer gatherings and professions of faith. By 1860, more than one million were added to church membership roles, and reported conversions numbered nearly fifty thousand per week.<sup>11</sup>

The awakening influenced urban cities, suburban towns, and rural villages. It was as real on the West Coast as on the East Coast, and in the North as in the South. It was even evident on college campuses. Yale, Princeton, and Amhurst reported revivals and considerable conversions within their student fellowships. Nor did the Civil War alter the course of the awakening. A revival occurred in the Confederate camps between 1862 and 1864 where an estimated one hundred thousand conversions were reported. D.L. Moody made several evangelistic trips to the Union camps.<sup>12</sup>

In many respects, the awakening that began in 1857 was without a human leader. It also demonstrated that the people who favored revival and soul-saving were the same

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<sup>11</sup> Keith Hardman, "The Time for Prayer: the Third Great Awakening," *Christian History*, July 1989. See <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ch/1989/issue23/> [accessed August 10, 2011].

<sup>12</sup> Davies, *I Will Pour Out My Spirit*, 153-55.

people who wished to devote energy to reform of society. Consensus prevailed in American Protestantism; a detente was forged by the spiritual heat of three Great Evangelical Awakenings in little more than a century. But that was about to change.

### **From Detente to Divergence: 1871 to 1918**

Following the consequences of the Civil War, the failure of Reconstruction, the financial panics that came after Reconstruction, and the emerging urban problems of industrialization and immigration, the American population gave up their joint hope of preparing for the Kingdom of Heaven and transforming the present society. Marty suggested that late in the nineteenth century denominational differences became less distinctive and Protestantism divided into two distinct theological groups.

The first group regarded Christianity as a “private” religion, whose primary objective was the personal salvation of the individual, matched by a holy life style in this world and consequent reward or punishment in the next life. As a result, the “private” Protestants or conservatives favored revivals and D.L. Moody was the leading revivalist. Moody said, “I look upon this world as a wrecked vessel. God has given me a lifeboat and said to me, ‘Moody, save all you can.’”<sup>13</sup> The second group regarded Christianity as a “public” religion, “insofar as it was more exposed to the social order and social destinies of men.” As a result, the “public” Protestants or liberals abandoned revivalism and relied on social theories to transform a fallen world.<sup>14</sup> The Protestant unity or detente forged during three Great Awakenings was therefore beginning to fracture under the stress of these opposing

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<sup>13</sup> B. J. Longfield, *The Presbyterian Controversy: Fundamentalists, Modernists, and Moderates* (New York: Oxford, 1991), 135.

<sup>14</sup> Marty, *Righteous Empire*, 177-79.

views. The harmony of consensus was replaced with a dissonance of divergence, and divergence arose in several major areas—God’s relationship with creation, the human condition, the authority of Scripture, eschatology, and education.<sup>15</sup>

The liberal perspective understood God as generally immanent, and his self-evident nature was present through out human history, being confirmed principally by personal experience or “feelings.”<sup>16</sup> Conversely, the conservative perspective understood God as primarily transcendent, being confirmed by his divine self-revelation.

Regarding the human condition, conservatives accepted that Adam and Eve sinned through disobedience; and thereafter, humanity possessed a sinful nature. Through continued sin, humanity was alienated from God, so there existed a sharp divide between holy God and his sinful creation. Conservatives believed the divide between God and his creation accentuated humanity’s need to be reconciled to God. Unless humanity received God’s redemptive grace, they were eternally doomed. While liberals agreed humanity needed God’s grace, redemption was understood as a remedy more for human ignorance than depravity.<sup>17</sup>

While these first two issues, God’s relation to his creation and the human condition, were responsible for some divergence, the major points of difference were the authority of Scripture, eschatology, and education. Liberals harmonized Scripture with the latest scientific, linguistic, and historical developments. Although they considered the Bible a source of knowledge about God and Jesus Christ, it was not necessarily a divine source, or the only source. Since the publication of the Darwinian theory of creation a quarter

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<sup>15</sup> Jon Stone, *On the Boundaries of American Evangelicalism* (New York: St Martin’s Press, 1997), 54.

<sup>16</sup> This is a reference to F. Schleiermacher’s theology, who is called the “Father of modern Liberal Theology.” See Karl Barth, *The Theology of Schleiermacher* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1982).

<sup>17</sup> Stone, *Boundaries of American Evangelicalism*, 55.



century earlier, the reliability of the biblical account of creation and its time scale were under attack. Moreover, modern linguistic and historical methods imported from Europe challenged traditional methods of biblical interpretation.

Liberalism has its origin in scientific naturalism, since it denies the entrance of God's creative power in the origin of Christianity, whether it be in regard to the virgin birth, the miracles of Christ, the bodily resurrection of Christ, or the Word of God. Wherever scientific objection arises, liberalism accommodates and harmonizes Christianity to parallel scientific naturalism. Liberalism attempts to retain the general principles of Christianity in regard to the "aspirations of the soul to live a better life and the struggle for a better world."<sup>18</sup> Conversely, conservatives held tenaciously to the classic theory of verbal inspiration and inerrancy of the Bible, as championed by Charles Hodge and B. B. Warfield.<sup>19</sup> They regarded the harmonization by the liberals as nothing less than a frontal assault on the "faith once delivered," since the Bible was the only true and authoritative revelation of God's salvation for humanity.<sup>20</sup>

One of the ways conservative Protestants were nurtured and edified was the annual Bible or Prophecy conferences. Such began in the early 1870s and continued into the twentieth century. It was at such gatherings that the case for an error free Bible was routinely made. In addition, the significance of biblical prophecy was highlighted, as suggested by the following comment, "Prophecy is simply history written in advance."<sup>21</sup> But the centerpiece of every conference was the teaching concerning the literal, visible,

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<sup>18</sup> J.D. Murch, *Co-operation without Compromise: A History of the National Association of Evangelicals* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1956), 22.

<sup>19</sup> This is a reference to "Princeton Theology." For more information, see Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, 3 vols. (New York: Scribner, 1873).

<sup>20</sup> Stone, *Boundaries of American Evangelicalism*, 56.

<sup>21</sup> Stone, *Boundaries of American Evangelicalism*, 61.

and premillennial return of Christ the King. It was understood that prior to his return, the Church and world would fall into a deep state of sinfulness, a complete apostasy. Christ would then come in judgment, destroy the prevailing wickedness, and establish his Kingdom in the New Jerusalem. He would rule for one thousand years, the millennium. Because Christ's return was expected before his millennial rule, the sequence of events was known as premillennialism, and those who subscribed to it were said to be premillennialists.<sup>22</sup> Premillennialists ignored the earlier and prevalent evangelical conviction that the steady advance of the Gospel and civilization would ultimately benefit humanity. They believed that while the present was bad, the future would be worse.<sup>23</sup>

Rounding out the prophetic premillennial conviction, the conservatives adopted the dispensationalist theology of John Nelson Darby around which the history of biblical prophecy could be organized. Darby, an Anglo-Irish evangelist and influential leader of the Plymouth Brethren, taught that God had divided human history into seven eras. In each time period, God governed or judged humanity by means of a different principle or dispensation. The seven dispensations are innocence, consciousness, government, promise, law, grace or church, and millennial kingdom. As each dispensation begins, humanity is at peace with God and all of his creation. But as time passes, disobedience and sin become manifest, the current dispensation ends, and the next dispensation is inaugurated by God. Each succeeding dispensation brings humanity into a closer relationship with God.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> For more information, see Robert Clouse, ed., *The Meaning of the Millennium: Four Views* (Dowers Drove, MI: IVP, 1977).

<sup>23</sup> Bebbington, *The Dominance of Evangelicalism*, 192.

<sup>24</sup> For more information concerning J.N. Darby, his theology, dispensationalism, and his works, see [http://www.museumstuff.com/learn/topics/John\\_Nelson\\_Darby](http://www.museumstuff.com/learn/topics/John_Nelson_Darby) [accessed August 14, 2011]; or John Walvoord, *The Millennial Kingdom* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1959).

Darby taught that humanity was currently in transition from the “grace or church era” to the “millennial kingdom era,” a transition which would be accompanied by the “great tribulation” described in the Revelation of John. Equally important, he taught that Jesus could return at any moment, where upon he would remove the “faithful remnant” of believers to the New Jerusalem where he would rule. The removal of the faithful was termed as the “rapture.” Darby noted that the faithful remnant were not necessarily identified as church members because the institutional church was now apostatized. Thus, to avoid being contaminated and condemned, the faithful should separate from the existing church.<sup>25</sup> Thus Bebbington notes, “There was no point in trying to improve society,” for it was soon destined to be destroyed in a “great conflagration.” Most conservatives disregarded this view, but this “prophetic idea provided a powerful persuasive toward withdrawal from the broader affairs of society” in the future.<sup>26</sup>

The blending of premillennial prophecy with dispensational theology was achieved by careful selection of conference speakers and editing of various periodicals. But Martin Marty suggests that there were three primary reasons for its impressive acceptance by millions of conservatives.<sup>27</sup> First, the public malaise generated by the growing problems of urbanization, industrialization, and scientific advances created a pessimistic void with respect to the future. Second, he credits D.L. Moody’s support with rescuing premillennialism from obscurity, and thereby restoring public hope in the future. Third, public acceptance was finalized with publication of the *Scofield Reference Bible* in 1909; for in it, the blending of premillennialism and dispensationalism was expertly accomplished in an appealing fashion which greatly facilitated public understanding. The *Scofield*

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<sup>25</sup> Stone, *Boundaries of American Evangelicalism*, 59-60.

<sup>26</sup> Bebbington, *The Dominance of Evangelicalism*, 200.

<sup>27</sup> Marty, *The Righteous Empire*, 216.

*Reference Bible* soon became the Bible of Protestant conservatives in America, and the premillennial dispensationalist perspective became the lens through which conservatives viewed world events and their environment.<sup>28</sup> For example, the War in Europe and the return of the Jews to Palestine were understood to be biblical predictions. As expected, liberals argued that such views represented mere speculation or conjecture by conservatives. Dispensational interpretation was dependent on a literal reading and understanding of Scripture with no allowance for historical-critical methodologies that liberals favored. To the highly educated liberals, the interpretative approach employed by the conservatives appeared to be simplistic and naive.<sup>29</sup>

Prior to the 1880s, most institutions of higher learning were controlled by Protestant conservatives, from trustees to presidents to funding sources. The institutions were generally small liberal arts colleges, headed by clergymen, with a core Christian curriculum, plus sufficient secular subjects to fulfill the basic academic requirements of future ministers, teachers, and the occasional revivalist. But beginning in the 1880s and continuing into the twentieth century, higher education became increasingly secularized. Religion became a separate department at most colleges or a graduate level seminary. The president and trustees were no longer clergymen, but industrialists, bankers, and educators, whose main focus was educational innovation.<sup>30</sup>

For curriculum, the colleges “took the German model of education to replace the older British standard. Not character, but research, not the handing on of tradition, but the search for intellectual innovation became the watchword.” And new forms of science, modeled after Darwin’s *Origin of the Species*, “took on unprecedented

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<sup>28</sup> C.I. Scofield, ed., *The Old Scofield Study Bible*, std. ed. (NY: Oxford, 1996).

<sup>29</sup> Stone, *Boundaries of American Evangelicalism*, 61-62.

<sup>30</sup> Marty, *Righteous Empire*, 202-03.

importance.”<sup>31</sup> Secular courses in business and science were added in order to attract increased funding from secular sources. And those Christian courses that remained represented a different approach to Christianity. They emphasized the application of modern science to social problems, and turned away from some traditional evangelical convictions, such as the universal need for personal salvation through Christ and the supernatural character of the Incarnation.<sup>32</sup> Daily chapel attendance became optional at most colleges. In summary, traditional evangelical Christianity beliefs were replaced with the Social Gospel.<sup>33</sup>

While the above represents the primary advances by liberals in higher education, conservatives actually collaborated, or at least contributed, in some respects to such changes. Noll notes that “Dispensationalism promoted a kind of supernaturalism that, for all of its virtues in defending the faith, failed to give proper attention to the world.”<sup>34</sup> Essentially, this suggests that premillennial dispensationalism produced an imbalance between a concern for the “hereafter” and the “here and now.” While it is generally accepted that this principle eventually led to problems in meeting the social needs of people, Noll’s point is that the same principle also operated in the intellectual arena and facilitated the implementation of the liberal educational agenda. Thus, premillennial dispensationalism gave conservatives the appearance of an anti-intellectual bias.

The evangelical detente that served American Protestantism for more than two centuries was now suffering under the stress of the divergent views of the conservative and liberal wings. As the twentieth century began, resolution appeared unachievable and

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<sup>31</sup> Mark A. Noll, *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1994), 112.

<sup>32</sup> Noll, *Scandal of the Evangelical Mind*, 113.

<sup>33</sup> For a more detailed look at this topic, see George M. Marsden, *The Soul of the American University: from Protestant Establishment to Established Nonbelief* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University, 1996).

<sup>34</sup> Noll, *Scandal of the Evangelical Mind*, 132.

conflict seemed assured. In order to delineate friend from foe, conservatives sought to define their fundamental doctrines. Between 1910 and 1915, a twelve volume set containing ninety essays, entitled *The Fundamentals: A Testimony to the Truth*, was published.<sup>35</sup> The essays were written by noteworthy authors, such as T. Spurgeon, B.B. Warfield, James Orr, C.I. Scofield, and A.T. Pierson and expressed opposition to modernism, higher biblical criticisms, theological liberalism, naturalism, Darwinism, and democratic socialism. Three million sets were mailed free-of-charge to clergymen, missionaries, and Sunday school superintendents. Not surprisingly, *The Fundamentals* became the standard of Fundamentalism, and those who subscribed to such doctrines were thereafter identified as “Fundamentalists.”<sup>36</sup> Liberals were known as “modernists.”

### **From Divergence to Dispute: 1919 to 1939**

On Sunday, May 21, 1922, Harry Emerson Fosdick, a Baptist liberal, preached his most famous sermon, “Shall the Fundamentalists Win?” at First Presbyterian in New York City. Fosdick hoped his sermon would be received as a plea for tolerance among those with diverse theological opinions, but the sermon exploded like a grenade, shattering Protestantism for the next two decades. He was well aware of the Fundamentalist’s increasing intolerance of modernism, their divergent views concerning the inspiration and inerrancy of Scripture, and evolution and creation. Thus, he said,

Here in the Christian Church today are these two groups, and the question which the Fundamentalists have raised is this—Shall one of them drive the other out? Do we

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<sup>35</sup> A.C. Dixon and R.A. Torrey, eds., *The Fundamentals: A Testimony to the Truth* (Los Angeles, CA: Bible Institute of LA, 1910-15). See <http://www.archive.org/details/fundamentaltest17chic> for text in various formats. [accessed August 16, 2011].

<sup>36</sup> Sweeney, *America Evangelical Story*, 165-66.

think the cause of Jesus Christ will be furthered by that? If He should walk through the ranks of his congregation this morning, can we imagine Him claiming as His own those who hold one idea of inspiration and sending from Him into outer darkness those who hold another? You cannot fit the Lord into that Fundamentalist mold!<sup>37</sup>

Fosdick maintained that modernists were thoughtful liberals who desired to reconcile the new knowledge of science, history, and religion with the faith. Conversely, Fundamentalists were intolerant and determined to oppose Christian fellowship with all who attempted to modify traditional doctrines. The core of the dispute was the difference between a literal reading of Scripture and what Fosdick believed was the progressive unfolding of God's will.<sup>38</sup>

Fosdick argued rightly that "all fundamentalists are conservatives, but not all conservatives are fundamentalists." He noted that all have a right to their opinion, but not the exclusive right to use the name Christian. He concluded his sermon by pleading for a new insight into Christianity and the presence of a tolerant spirit in all.<sup>39</sup>

The sermon was quickly published in several journals and widely distributed in pamphlet form to most Protestant clergy. Fundamentalist reaction was swift and strong. In response, Rev. C.E. Macartney of Philadelphia preached a sermon entitled "Shall Unbelief Win?" which called for the censure of Fosdick. Eventually, Fosdick was forced to resign his Presbyterian pulpit, but he became the long term pastor at Riverside Church in Manhattan which in turn became the flagship of American liberal Christianity.<sup>40</sup>

The issues had been joined; the gauntlets thrown down. Both sides accepted the challenge, and each moved to find the best site to carry on the fight. The Fundamentalists

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<sup>37</sup> H.E. Fosdick, "Shall the Fundamentalist Win?" <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/5070/> [accessed August 20, 2011].

<sup>38</sup> Longfield, *The Presbyterian Controversy*, 9-11.

<sup>39</sup> Marty, *Righteous Empire*, 227.

<sup>40</sup> Sweeney, *American Evangelical Story*, 167-68.

decided there were two primary concerns. First, there was the issue of teaching evolution in high schools and the presentation of anti-biblical scientific theories at colleges. This would consume the movement from 1919 to 1927. Second, there was concern for the spread of liberal theology throughout Protestantism. That concern is best illustrated by a remark of Billy Sunday, the former ballplayer turned evangelist, who said that the continuing emphasis on the social Gospel was “trying to make a religion of social service with Jesus Christ left out. We’ve had enough of this godless social service nonsense!”<sup>41</sup> The second concern envisaged several diverse targets—control of the local churches, mission boards, seminaries, and even denominations, if possible. This was to be a series of small skirmishes fought along a wide front over a protracted duration.<sup>42</sup>

The first concern of science and religion was fought in court. During the early 1920s, several southern states had passed anti-evolutionary legislation that forbade the teaching of Darwinian evolution. In Tennessee, the Butler law had been enacted, and the ACLU offered free legal services to anyone willing to test the new law. Businessmen in Dayton, a small rural village of seventeen hundred, convinced a local science teacher, John T. Scopes, to challenge the new law. The ACLU supplied the defense counsel, Clarence Darrow, an obstreperous agnostic. The prosecution counsel was William Jennings Bryan, a former congressman, presidential candidate, and Secretary of State.<sup>43</sup> Bryan was the natural standard bearer for this cause, since he had gained popularity with his frequently quoted remark to a fundamentalist audience in New York in 1923, “If we have come to the stage at which we must decide between geology and Christianity, I think it is better to

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<sup>41</sup> Mark Noll and Nathan Hatch, et al, *Eerdmans’ Handbook to Christianity in America* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1983), 314.

<sup>42</sup> Stone, *Boundaries of Evangelicalism*, 63.

<sup>43</sup> Stone, *Boundaries of Evangelicalism*, 65. Counsel retained by William Bell Riley’s World’s Christian Fundamentalists Association which was founded in 1919 to fight evolution and modernism.



believe in the Rock of Ages than the age of rocks.”<sup>44</sup> The trial attracted more than one hundred and fifty members of the press, and was portrayed as the “Monkey Trial.” Scopes lost the legal decision and was fined one hundred dollars. On appeal, the verdict was subsequently overturned on a minor technicality.<sup>45</sup>

Yet nothing better symbolized the Fundamentalists’ defeat than their apparent victory at Dayton in 1925. It was a pyrrhic victory, since Darrow made Bryan look foolish and the fundamentalist cause absurd. Bryan appeared to be unsophisticated and uneducated, a simple rube or bumpkin. This was unexpected because fundamentalism was strongest in the urban areas and the north. Longfield wrote, “Bryan’s performance confirmed all of the worst stereotypes of fundamentalists as uneducated, unthinking, and reactionary.”<sup>46</sup> Marty similarly noted that the “jury thought that Bryan won, but others thought Darrow had made a fool out of old-line, anti-evolutionary Protestantism. Fundamentalists had left Protestantism debilitated by disagreement and divided by dissent.”<sup>47</sup> Typical of their anti-intellectual or antiscientific attitude was a remark made by evangelist Billy Sunday, “When the Word of God says one thing and scholarship says another thing, scholarship can go to hell!”<sup>48</sup> Three months after the trial, H.L. Mencken wrote, Fundamentalists “are thick in the mean streets” of America. “They are everywhere that learning is too heavy a burden for mortal minds to carry.”<sup>49</sup> Despite their best efforts, Fundamentalists suffered a loss at Dayton, and their cause lost influence in American culture.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> *The New York Times*, December 8, 1923.

<sup>45</sup> Sweeney, *American Evangelical Story*, 169-70.

<sup>46</sup> Longfield, *The Presbyterian Controversy*, 155.

<sup>47</sup> Marty, *Righteous Empire*, 220.

<sup>48</sup> Brian R. Farmer, *American Conservatism: History, Theory, and Practice* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Scholars, 2005), 213.

<sup>49</sup> H.L. Mencken, “To Expose a Fool,” *American Mercury*, October 1925, 158-60.

<sup>50</sup> For a more detailed account of the Scopes Trial and its cultural consequence, see Edward Larson, *Summer for the Gods: the Scopes Trial* (New York: Basic Books, 2006).

The second major concern was stopping the spread of liberalism within the various structures of the organized church. The term “fundamentalist” was first applied to a conservative group from the Northern Baptist Convention who had established a group to oppose liberalism within the Baptist denomination. The editor of a Baptist newspaper, *The Watchman-Examiner*, coined the term, “Fundamentalist”, meaning those “who were ready to do battle royal for the Fundamentals.” The conservative forces posed a formidable threat because they had experience in promoting the conservative cause at prophecy conferences, Bible institutes, and evangelistic events. The battles were most intense where fundamentalism and liberalism were of equal strength. Thus, the denominational controversy was severe in the Northern Baptist Convention, Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., and Disciples of Christ. There were several new denominations organized during the fierce fighting or its aftermath, such as the Orthodox Presbyterian, Bible Presbyterian, and General Association of Regular Baptists. The conflict was less severe in denominations that were then quite liberal, such as the Protestant Episcopal. The same held where the conservative cause controlled, such as the Southern Baptist.<sup>51</sup>

The chief strategist and spokesman in the fight against liberalism was J. Gresham Machen, professor of New Testament at Princeton Seminary. In 1923, he wrote,

What the liberal theologian has retained after abandoning to the enemy one Christian doctrine after another is not Christianity at all, but a religion which is so entirely different from Christianity as to belong in a different category. In trying to remove from Christianity everything that could possibly be objected to in the name of science, in trying to bribe off the enemy by these concessions, the apologist has really abandoned what he started to defend.... And that being the case, it is highly undesirable that liberalism and Christianity should continue within the bounds of the same organization. A separation between the two parties in the church is the crying need of the hour.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> George Marsden, *Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1991), 56-58.

<sup>52</sup> J. Gresham Machen, *Christianity and Liberalism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1946), 6-7, 160.

The liberal response was cast along two lines. They argued that they were preserving the essence of Christianity, while Fundamentalists were only endorsing theories. Typically of this approach was William P. Merrill who wrote, "Liberal Christianity is essentially in harmony with the New Testament" and represents "the religious hope of the world."<sup>53</sup> But more importantly, liberals based their plea upon mutual tolerance, and since most Protestants were moderates that approach was respected. Marsden notes by 1930, it was evident a policy of inclusiveness would prevail eventually in the denominations.<sup>54</sup>

With regard to seminaries, most had migrated toward the liberal end of the theological spectrum by 1920. Despite the efforts of its recently appointed President, J. Ross Stevenson, Princeton was an exception and had remained staunchly conservative.<sup>55</sup> Since the conservatives held a narrow margin of power on the faculty in 1925, the retirement of a faculty member called that matter into question. The position was offered initially to a conservative, but was refused for personal reasons. The seminary Board then offered the position to J. Gresham Machen, who had taught at Princeton for twenty years as the New Testament Professor. Machen accepted, but was uncomfortable knowing the process required the approval of the Presbyterian General Assembly. Machen had run afoul of the General Assembly several years earlier when he was unable to support a prohibition measure due to ecclesiastical concerns.<sup>56</sup>

As feared, the General Assembly refused to approve Machen's appointment, and instead appointed a committee to study the Princeton situation. In 1926, the committee met with the alumni and learned that the seminary's controversy was caused by the

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<sup>53</sup> Stone, *Boundaries of American Evangelicalism*, 70.

<sup>54</sup> Marsden, *Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism*, 59.

<sup>55</sup> Longfield, *The Presbyterian Controversy*, 177.

<sup>56</sup> Longfield, *The Presbyterian Controversy*, 164.

faculty. The committee then met with faculty who informed them the controversy was due to supporting two opposing views of the truth and maintaining peace was impossible. Finally, the committee met with the President who said that Dr. Machen created suspicion, distrust, dissention, and division. The President's solution to the controversy was to make the seminary representative of the theology of the broader Presbyterian Church. In 1927, the committee reported its findings to the General Assembly: (1) the committee thought the nature of the strife was administrative, not doctrinal, (2) the greatest obstacle to peace was governance through two boards, and (3) therefore, the seminary should be reorganized under a single Board, rather than the present two.<sup>57</sup>

In subsequent General Assemblies, the reorganization of the seminary was affirmed, enabled, and implemented. With the reorganization accomplished by spring 1929, Machen argued that an epoch had ended, maintenance of scholarly Reformed evangelicalism had been imperiled, and an evangelical seminary must be created to replace the "old Princeton."<sup>58</sup> Thus in June 1929, a group of ministers, laymen, Princeton faculty, and directors of the seminary met in New York City to discuss the formation of a new seminary. By July, the enterprise bore a name, Westminster Theological Seminary. The Westminster's goals were: (1) to continue the heritage that Princeton had abandoned, (2) to achieve scholarly Reformed evangelicalism of international acclaim, (3) to emphasize biblical and theological excellence, rather than social science, (4) to graduate soldiers who could fight for the faith, (5) and above all, to make it a place of ideas:

Ideas, after all, are the great conquerors; they cross the best-dug trenches; they cut the most intricate barbed wire; they move armies like puppets; they build empires and pull them down. Here is why Westminster had to be founded, why it had to provide an education second to none, why its graduates had to be determined gladiators on the

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<sup>57</sup> Longfield, *The Presbyterian Controversy*, 167-68.

<sup>58</sup> Longfield, *The Presbyterian Controversy*, 169.

intellectual battlefield of the modern world....If the intellectual foundation of the faith were destroyed by the secularization of the church, Christianity would be lost.<sup>59</sup>

Westminster began its initial academic year in 1929 with a faculty of five and a student body of fifty. The first class included Harold Ockenga, a person who will have a significant influence on Carl Henry's personal and professional life. While at Wheaton in the mid 1930s, the Presbyterian controversy engulfed Henry:

A somewhat antidenominational spirit settled over the campus... Those became drab and dark days for Wheaton. The wounds were not easily healed. Evangelicals... were at odds with each other. Even faculty members suffered a period of unfortunate internal tension. Whatever early inclination I then had of possibly seeking Presbyterian ordination and ministry was discouraged by the condemnatory spirit and one-sided propaganda.<sup>60</sup>

By the middle 1930s, the two questions Fosdick posed in 1922 from his pulpit in New York City, "Shall the fundamentalists win?" and "Shall one side drive the other out?" had been answered. The Fundamentalists lost. On the first front, the Fundamentalists lost the major battle for the American intellect in a courtroom in Dayton, TN. On the second front, the battle to stop the advance of liberalism was fought along an extended skirmish line over a protracted period. It was contested, as Stone wrote, in denominational conferences, seminaries, mission societies, and church parking lots.<sup>61</sup> The result was the same; the Fundamentalist's cause was defeated. Yet, they were not driven from the Protestant church. Rather, the Fundamentalists shunned the mainstream of American Protestantism and culture and returned to doing what they had always done best, evangelizing and rebuilding their strength in the local church. As Marsden notes, "Fundamentalism was not disappearing but realigning," not retreating, but rebuilding.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Longfield, *The Presbyterian Controversy*, 177-79.

<sup>60</sup> Carl F.H. Henry, *Confessions of a Theologian: An Autobiography* (Waco, TX: Word, 1986), 67-68.

<sup>61</sup> Stone, *Boundaries of American Evangelicalism*, 68.

<sup>62</sup> Marsden, *Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism*, 61.

## From Dispute to Division: 1940 to 1947

Martin Marty quotes the thoughts of H. Richard Niebuhr to describe the split that separated the modernists and Fundamentalists in the late 1930s. The modernists thought Fundamentalists were not abreast of the changing times, were medieval as the world was growing modern, were dogmatic as civilization was becoming scientific, were individualistic in perspective during a period of collectivism, and were theological in an era of humanism. Conversely, Fundamentalists thought modernists had allowed the church to become secularized. To the Fundamentalists, the crisis was not the church in the world, but an abundance of the world in the Church.<sup>63</sup> Hence, the prospect of uniting Christ's shattered body, even the Protestant elements thereof, seemed remote.

The Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, the FCCC hereafter, was founded in 1908 and represented an early effort to unite Protestantism. From inception, it was controlled by modernists. Over the years, it gained control of some important tasks, such as the allocation of free broadcasting time to Protestant denominations and appointment of military Chaplains. It was obvious that Fundamentalist's concerns were not equitably served by the FCCC. Thus in 1941, Carl McIntire<sup>64</sup>, an influential fundamentalist radio preacher, founded the American Council of Christian Churches, the ACCC hereafter, was committed to biblical orthodoxy, national revival, and opposing the FCCC when Fundamentalist's causes were not served appropriately.

Concurrent in time and growing out of the existing New England Fellowship of Evangelicals, a third organization was formed in 1942, The National Association of

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<sup>63</sup> Marty, *Righteous Empire*, 235-36.

<sup>64</sup> For more information on McIntire, see <http://www.carlmcintire.org/index.php> [accessed Aug. 26, 2011].

Evangelicals, the NAE hereafter, led by Harold John Ockenga.<sup>65</sup> While the ACCC and NAE were theological similar in most ways, they differed significantly in tactical purpose. With respect to membership, the ACCC limited its membership to denominations, while the NAE opened its membership to denominations, parachurch organizations, and individuals who accepted a common statement of faith.<sup>66</sup> A second issue concerned the Pentecostal and Holiness denominations. The ACCC excluded them, while the NAE received both based on their acceptance of the statement of faith. Third and perhaps most important, the ACCC welcomed only those denominations or churches who were separatists, meaning those who had renounced modernism and separated from denominations or organizations associated with the FCCC. The NAE, as a matter of tactical practice, adopted a motto “cooperation without compromise”, that was in direct opposition to that ACCC mandate.<sup>67</sup> By the mid 1940s, Fundamentalists were divided between exclusivist Fundamentalists and new-evangelicals.

The basis for this division was described by Ockenga in an article entitled “Can Fundamentalism Win America?” He wrote, “Fundamentalism, as presently constituted, is impotent” because it has “lost every major ecclesiastical battle in the last twenty years.” It is powerless against “the big three of Modernism, Catholicism and Secularism” to shape or even influence the future of American culture. Fundamentalism “has been weighed and found wanting,” because it has a divisive presence that arises from its negative social ethic, uncooperative posture, combative attitude, and isolative spirit. Thus, Ockenga concluded that Fundamentalism could not win America. This article

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<sup>65</sup> For more information concerning Ockenga, see Harold Lindsell, *Park Street Prophet: A Life of Harold Ockenga* (Wheaton, IL: Van Kampen, 1951).

<sup>66</sup> For NAE’s Statement of Faith, see <http://www.nae.net/about-us/statement-of-faith>.

<sup>67</sup> Rosell, *The Surprising Work of God*, 93-95.

signaled the break with Fundamentalism and the beginning of the progressive evangelical movement, for Ockenga wrote that Fundamentalism knows that “there is need for a progressive fundamentalism with an ethnical message.” And equally important, the article signaled that Ockenga was ready to lead and speak for the evangelical wing.<sup>68</sup>

Yet, Ockenga and his colleagues were convinced that if the voice of Fundamentalism could be reformed, then evangelical Christianity could “win America.” The evangelical reformers anticipated the possibility of a resurgence of evangelicalism. They understood their lineage to be Jonathan Edwards, John Wesley, George Whitefield, and Charles Finney. Once organized, they believed the evangelical faith could challenge and influence secularized society.<sup>69</sup>

Ockenga and the NAE supported revival as the most effective solution for America, if America and its secularized culture were to be saved. During the war, the general theme of God and country was popular. Three important sub themes emerged; (1) an increasing concern for youth and public morality, (2) an increasing concern for religion, and (3) an increasing civic faith. Thus on Memorial Day in 1945, a revival event, sponsored by Youth for Christ, hereafter YFC, attracted a crowd of seventy thousand at Soldier Field in Chicago to honor those who died in World War II. Billy Graham, a young evangelist, who had been chosen to lead YFC, called for revival to change America and the world that day. The *Chicago Daily News* declared that YFC was “the biggest sensation in the world of religious revivals since Billy Sunday.” YFC presented the Gospel of Christ to a half million youth in nearly four hundred cities during its initial year.<sup>70</sup> YFC and the

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<sup>68</sup> H.J. Ockenga, “Can Fundamentalism Win America?” *Christian Life and Times*, June 1947, 13.

<sup>69</sup> Marsden, *Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism*, 64.

<sup>70</sup> Joel Carpenter, *Revive Us Again: the Reawakening of American Fundamentalism* (New York: Oxford, 1997), 161. See also “Bobby Sox Hit Sawdust Trail”, *The Chicago Daily News*, February 3, 1945.



evangelical movement of which it was a part responded to those emerging themes in a positive manner. Thus, Graham and the YFC were quickly endorsed and supported by Ockenga and NAE network of churches. Among the many young men who preached on the weekends for YFC was Carl Henry.<sup>71</sup>

NAE attracted a larger number and more doctrinally diverse membership than the ACCC, since the ACCC limited itself to independent and nondenominational churches. The NAE thought that revival would be the result of the Holy Spirit working through a cooperative strategy of member churches that were willing to engage culture by presenting the Gospel message in a relevant manner. Conversely, the ACCC thought revival would be the result of the Holy Spirit purifying churches as they separated from various denominations and organizations where modernism was present. To the exclusivist Fundamentalist, the NAE's course seemed hellacious. To the cooperative evangelical, the ACCC's course appeared absurd. Thus, their respective operating practices widened the division between them. The leadership of the NAE had initially hoped that they might revive the Fundamentalist movement, and then reform it, or if need be reconstruct it; so that the conservative wing of Protestantism could be unified again. It became apparent that the evangelicals' hope of inclusiveness would never eventuate.<sup>72</sup>

Therefore, as the mid twentieth century approached, American Protestantism was divided by a three-party conflict. The institutional structures of Protestantism were generally controlled by modernists. The Fundamentalists controlled many independent and nondenominational churches, a network of radio stations, and assorted Bible colleges. The emerging new-evangelicals were focused on the "unvoiced multitude,"

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<sup>71</sup> Mark Shaw, *Global Awakening* (Dowers Grove, IL: IVP, 2010), 113-14, 120-21.

<sup>72</sup> Stone, *Boundaries of American Evangelicalism*, 73-76.

those Bible believing moderates who did not support the modernist' or Fundamentalist' extremes. The new evangelicals were, in Ockenga's words, "praying for and awaiting a national revival." They would not "fight in some back-alley scrap" while others contended for the hearts and minds of the American people.<sup>73</sup> The Fundamentalists attacked the modernists and evangelicals, and the modernists attacked the Fundamentalists and evangelicals. The evangelicals merely defended themselves, attacking no one. As Ockenga remarked, "we do not want to waste our time and energy in such fruitless controversy."<sup>74</sup>

Carl Henry, an evangelical Christian, member of the NAE, and evangelist for Youth for Christ, entered the mid-twentieth century belonging to a minority, one that was under attack from the conservative right and liberal left. Nevertheless, he had developed relationships with Ockenga and Graham that became an important part of his future.

Ockenga and his fellow evangelicals realized that the doorway to national revival could be opened only with the keys of faith, cooperation and unity. As will be seen in Chapter Three, the Holy Spirit entrusted those keys to a small, select group that included Harold John Ockenga, Carl F. H. Henry, and Billy Graham. Chapter Three explores Henry's life and his relationships with Graham and Ockenga, as they were empowered to lead the nation through Great Awakening IV. Chapter Four then discusses Henry's vast contribution to the evangelical Christian faith from various perspectives. The Appendix provides an historical timeline that visually links some of the significant events of Chapters Two, Three, and Four.

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<sup>73</sup> Carpenter, *Revive Us Again*, 150.

<sup>74</sup> Stone, *Boundaries of American Evangelicalism*, 78.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE LIFE OF CARL HENRY

#### Beginning Life: 1913 to 1928

Carl Ferdinand Howard Henry was born in New York City on January 22, 1913, the oldest of eight children of two recent German immigrants, Karl F. Heinrich and Johanna Vähröder. Karl Heinrich immigrated in 1910 and was twenty-seven at birth of his first child. Karl, the son of a baker, worked in a midtown Manhattan bakery. Johanna was barely twenty-one at the birth of her first child. Her father was a musician who taught trumpet and violin. The family lived in the Yorkville section of Manhattan, the East Seventies to Nineties, an area densely populated by Germanic immigrants.<sup>1</sup>

In 1920, following the birth of their fifth child, the Heinrich family moved to a small one acre farm on Long Island near Central Islip, approximately fifty miles east of the City. Karl continued to work at the midtown bakery, commuting daily via the Long Island Railroad, which meant leaving home before sunrise and returning after sunset. Thus, he was absent from the family much of the time. The family farm provided vegetables and poultry for the family table, plus a small cash income.<sup>2</sup>

In the aftermath of World War I, the Heinrich family stopped speaking German, both publicly and privately. Like so many in the Germanic community, they anglicized their family name and became the “Henry” family.<sup>3</sup> As for religious heritage, Carl Henry was the son of a Roman Catholic mother and a Lutheran father, but his parents were

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<sup>1</sup> Carl F. H. Henry, *Confessions of a Theologian: An Autobiography* (Waco, TX: Word, 1986), 15-16.

<sup>2</sup> Henry, *Confessions*, 20-22.

<sup>3</sup> Henry, *Confessions*, 16.

indifferent to their respective churches, seldom attending church, even on Christmas and Easter. There was no family Bible, and no grace was offered at meals. Perhaps to avoid the Catholic-Protestant dilemma of the family, the children were sent to an Episcopal church in Islip. At twelve, Carl was baptized and confirmed on successive Sundays at the Episcopal Church. But by his late teens, he admitted, "I dropped out under the impression that I had inherited all that institutional religion could offer."<sup>4</sup>

### Developing Roots: 1929 to 1946

In High School, Henry excelled in composition and typing. He could type more than eighty-five words per minute and won an essay contest in his senior year.<sup>5</sup> After graduation in May 1929, he began a career as a journalist on Long Island. Initially, he sold newspaper subscriptions and did sports reporting for *The Islip Press*. Later, he proof read galleys. By age twenty, he became editor of the *Smithtown Star*, and later the *Port Jefferson Times Echo*. Additional responsibilities as a suburban correspondent for *The New York Times*, *New York Herald*, and *Chicago Tribune* were eventually added.<sup>6</sup>

As a journalist, Henry received complimentary tickets for local sports events, county fairs, summer theater, Broadway shows, Madison Square Garden events. If his column required a film review, local theaters reserved seats for Henry and a guest. Henry's heart and mind were focused on secular pleasures, quite oblivious to spiritual joys.<sup>7</sup>

Yet, God confronted Henry as he and a Christian friend sat in a car, parked beside the

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<sup>4</sup> Henry, *Confessions*, 26.

<sup>5</sup> Henry, *Confessions*, 30-32.

<sup>6</sup> Gabriel Fackre, "Carl F. H. Henry," in *A Handbook of Christian Theologians*, eds. Dean G. Peerman and Martin E. Marty (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1984), 583.

<sup>7</sup> Henry, *Confessions*, 36-37.

quiet waters of the Great South Bay, along the south shore of Long Island.<sup>8</sup> “I was a newspaperman,” wrote Henry, “preoccupied with man’s minutiae when God tracked me down; the Word pursuing a lost purveyor of words. In this encounter, my own semantic skill meant little....I found myself at a loss for words.” He was in the midst of an extended conversation with his friend concerning the implications of the Christian faith and his life. “There I was, a Long Island editor and suburban correspondent quite accustomed to interviewing the high and mighty of this world, yet wholly inept at formulating phrases for the King of Glory.” His friend suggested they pray the Lord’s Prayer. Phrase by phrase, Henry repeated the words. In the midst of his prayer, Henry felt that, “God met me in prayer....My aching spirit cried out to God for forgiveness of sins and for new life in Christ. Somewhere in the echoes of eternity, I heard the pounding hammers that marked the Saviour’s crucifixion in my stead.” It was June 10, 1933; Henry was twenty. The consequence of that day, he remembered as “incomparable peace, the reality of sins forgiven, a sense of destiny and direction, and above all, the awareness of a new Presence and Power, the core of new life...I was now on speaking terms with God, a friend of the King, a servant of the Saviour.”<sup>9</sup>

With his new found faith, Henry was led in a new direction, from the world of secular news to the kingdom of Good News. Henry noted that his conviction to enter college to prepare for fulltime Christian service overtook him gradually, and he mentioned that to Dr. Frank E. Gaebelein, headmaster of The Stony Brook School. Gaebelein discussed Wheaton College and gave Henry a catalogue. Henry was attracted by Wheaton’s

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<sup>8</sup> Henry, *Confessions*, 43-45. The friend was Gene Bedford of the Oxford Group, a parachurch organization whose strategy was to reach professionals that exemplified Christ who could call others in their community to a changed life. Through this group, Henry received a copy of A.J. Russell’s *For Sinners Only* that deeply influenced him.

<sup>9</sup> Carl F.H. Henry, “Confessions of an Editor,” *Christianity Today*, March 29, 1968, 3.

Christian world-life view and its reputation as the “evangelical Harvard.” He was amused by the no-dancing, no-movie and no-card-playing code, but agreed to accept it.<sup>10</sup>

However, at age twenty-two, prior to college, Henry was forced to face a family crisis. He wrote, “My father and mother, to my surprise and distress had come to a parting of the ways. Despite dim and disconcerting rumors of parties involving women and drink, I was unaware that my father’s weekends...had deeper implications.”<sup>11</sup>

Henry’s father struggled with a drinking problem and had maintained a small distillery in the family kitchen during Prohibition.<sup>12</sup> The crisis was resolved and then faded, though it consumed some of Henry’s cash reserves for college.

Henry enrolled at Wheaton College in the philosophy program directed by Dr. Gordon H. Clark. Clark was an orthodox Presbyterian who inspired his students to master Reformed Theology and the history of Western thought, so that they could rationally defend Christianity. Clark stressed logical consistency and rationality as the primary tests of the truth of the Christian faith.<sup>13</sup> Clark was an important influence on Henry’s intellectual life. For example, Henry’s first major book was dedicated to the “Men of Athens who have sharpened my convictions, by action and reaction, in delightful philosophic interchange.”<sup>14</sup> One of the men mentioned was G.H.C., Gordon Haddon Clark, and Clark was accorded the honor of writing the Forward to that book. Much of Henry’s repudiation of other theological and philosophical systems employed Clark’s technique of demonstrating a system fails when it lacks internal consistency or

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<sup>10</sup> Henry, *Confessions*, 50-51.

<sup>11</sup> Henry, *Confessions*, 55-56.

<sup>12</sup> John D. Woolbridge, “Carl F.H. Henry,” in *Ambassadors for Christ* (Chicago: Moody, 1994) 73-77.

<sup>13</sup> R. Albert Mohler, “Carl F. H. Henry,” in *Theologians of the Baptist Tradition*, eds. Timothy George and David Dockery (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2001), 280-81.

<sup>14</sup> Carl F. H. Henry, *Remaking the Modern Mind* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1946).

could not adequately address the problems of human existence. The Wheaton environment also provided another long term influence on Henry's personal and profession life through friendships with Billy Graham and Harold Lindsell.

Upon arrival at Wheaton, Henry's major concern was financing his education. In answer to his prayers, God provided three sources of income according to Henry's gifts.<sup>15</sup> First, there was a staff vacancy for a typing instructor at Wheaton; and he qualified for the position, despite the absence of a degree. Second, at various times in his student career, he served as a reporter for the *Wheaton Daily Journal*, *Aurora Beacon*, *Elgin Courier-News*, and correspondent for the *Chicago Tribune*. Third, with his journalistic experience and expertise, he was asked to teach a journalism course. Thus, financing his education was not a problem; managing work, study, and class schedules was a continual difficulty. Nevertheless, he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree, cum laude, in 1938. He considered an employment offer to join Moody Bible College as director of promotion, but continued to follow God's calling and enrolled in theological studies at Wheaton. A Master of Arts in theology then followed in 1940.

Helga Bender was a senior at Wheaton, majoring in German with a minor in French. She enrolled in Henry's typing class in 1935, and was more interested in typing than Henry. He knew that she would "have to be persuaded that she ought not to marry any of the others already in line."<sup>16</sup>

Helga was the youngest of six children of Baptist missionary parents. Her father, Carl Jacob, born in Baden, Germany, immigrated to New York in 1881 at age twelve

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<sup>15</sup> Russell Chandler, "Carl F.H. Henry: The Towering Theologian," in *The Overcomers*, (Old Tappan, NJ: Revell, 1978), 28.

<sup>16</sup> Carl F.H. Henry, *Conversations with Carl Henry: Christianity for Today*, (Lewiston, NY: Mellen Press, 1986), 116.

with his sister and lived with their grandparents in Buffalo. He graduated from the Rochester Baptist Seminary, German Division in 1899, and was appointed a missionary to Cameroon, Africa. Before leaving on assignment, he became a naturalized US citizen.<sup>17</sup> In 1903, while on furlough in Berlin, Carl met Hedwig Kloeber, a native of Dresden, Germany, who was a deaconess-nurse. They were married in 1904 and returned to Cameroon.<sup>18</sup> Helga was born in 1915 in Cameroon. As the war ended, Carl and family left Cameroon and he assumed pastorates in Buffalo, New York in 1920, in Watertown, Wisconsin from 1921 to 1925, and in Chicago, Illinois from 1925 to 1929. He later returned to Cameroon with his daughter Erica, a graduate nurse, while Mrs. Bender and Helga remained in Chicago. The Bender children were high achievers and consistently earned academic honors. Helga was salutatorian of her high school class and won a scholarship to Carroll College. She chose instead to enroll at Wheaton in 1932 and financed her education by working in the German and French Departments.<sup>19</sup>

Henry dated Helga in the spring of 1935, describing her to a friend as beautiful, dignified, and quiet. He was captivated by her hazel eyes, which he said sparkled “like the light of heaven.”<sup>20</sup> She returned to Wheaton, as a graduate student in education in the Master of Arts program, and they continued dating from fall 1935 to spring 1937. Following her graduation in 1937, she was hired as Dean of Women and professor of German at Ellendale State College in North Dakota. Their relationship continued by letter; she wrote, “Better to wait even a long time for God’s sure leading, than to spend a

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<sup>17</sup> Helga Bender Henry, *Cameroon on a Clear Day* (Pasadena, CA: Carey Library, 1999), 9-20.

<sup>18</sup> Helga Henry, *Cameroon*, 30-33.

<sup>19</sup> Helga Henry, *Cameroon*, 148-57.

<sup>20</sup> Timothy George, “Inventing Evangelicalism,” *Christianity Today*, March 2004, 48-51.



lifetime in regret. This period of separation I definitely believe is in his plan.”<sup>21</sup>

Their relationship survived the separation, and they were engaged during the Christmas season of 1939. Anticipating their marriage, Helga wrote in March 1940, “I’m only yours ... I’m glad of that. And I shall be yours more and more, as we learn new privileges and responsibilities. Some day, too, I’ll hold in my arms the children we wait for, children we’ll dedicate as God directs us to his supreme purpose.”<sup>22</sup> On August 17, 1940, Henry’s bachelorhood ended and he and Helga were married.

Through personal study, Henry was convinced that immersion and believer’s baptism were the prescribed standard of the New Testament. During a family visit in 1937, he sought spiritual guidance at the First Baptist Church of Babylon, Long Island. The Pastor explained that baptism was a personal identification with the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, and served as a witness to the world of citizenship in the kingdom of God. In agreement, Henry was baptized the following week at First Baptist in Babylon. He, therefore, began thinking about Baptist ordination, and thereby avoiding the then current Presbyterian denominational controversy that had infested Wheaton.<sup>23</sup>

While studying theology at Wheaton in 1938, Henry concurrently enrolled in Northern Baptist Theology Seminary for a Bachelor of Divinity degree. The seminary was located in Chicago, approximately twenty-five miles east of Wheaton. In addition, Henry accepted the pastorate of Humboldt Park Baptist Church in October 1940, a church located two miles from the seminary with about thirty-five members. During his

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<sup>21</sup> Henry, *Confessions*, 84.

<sup>22</sup> Henry, *Confessions*, 88.

<sup>23</sup> Paul R. House, “Remaking the Modern Mind: Revising Carl Henry’s Theological Vision” *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 8, no.4 (Winter 1984): 6. In the aftermath of the Presbyterian controversy, Buswell, Wheaton’s President, was dismissed. This had significant consequence for Henry. Thereafter, he avoided denominational politics by maintaining the following priorities: be a Christian first, an evangelical second, and a Baptist third. See related material on page 48 concerning Henry and this controversy.

pastorate, attendance doubled and he was ordained through the Northern Baptist Convention.<sup>24</sup> In 1941, he earned a degree in divinity, a BD. He continued his theological studies at Northern Baptist the following year, and earned a Doctor of Theology, ThD, in 1942.<sup>25</sup> Northern Baptist quickly recognized his talents and offered him a fulltime position on their faculty as Assistant Professor. Subsequently, Henry became Professor of Systematic Theology and Philosophy and Religion, and was eventually named Chair of the Department of Philosophy and Religion. Later, Henry joined Edward John Carnell in the PhD program at Boston University under Edgar S. Brightman.<sup>26</sup> He graduated with a degree in theology, and his thesis was published.<sup>27</sup>

### **Bearing Fruit: 1947 to 1967**

During the late 1940s, Henry received several invitations to consider administrative positions at academic institutions, i.e. Sioux Falls College and Western Baptist Seminary. Another invitation came from his friend and former colleague at Northern Baptist, T. Leonard Lewis, who had become President of Gordon College in Massachusetts. Gordon Divinity School was seeking an academic Dean in conjunction with its planned relocation to a suburban venue. Yet, none of these seemed particularly appealing to Henry.<sup>28</sup>

In the 1940s, Charles E. Fuller of *The Old-Fashioned Revival Hour* was the most popular evangelist in the country with a national radio audience of fifteen to twenty

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<sup>24</sup> Mohler, *Theologians of the Baptist Tradition*, 292.

<sup>25</sup> Henry, *Confessions*, 98.

<sup>26</sup> Richard A Purdy, "Carl F. H. Henry," in *Handbook of Evangelical Theologians*, ed. W. A. Elwell (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1993), 260.

<sup>27</sup> Carl F.H. Henry, *Personal Idealism and Strong's Theology* (Wheaton, IL: Van Kampen Press, 1951).

<sup>28</sup> Henry, *Confessions*, 106-09.

million weekly listeners.<sup>29</sup> Fuller sensed a deep calling by God to establish a school to train young men to preach the Gospel. He wrote Wilbur Smith concerning this matter,

I agree with you perfectly that if this school is to be, it should be the best of its kind in the world. It should stand out first, as being absolutely true to the fundamentals of the faith, and second, as a school of high scholarship. I note the four suggestions you mention which should dominate—particularly the study of the atoning work of Christ. I agree with you perfectly. Oh, brother, God has laid so heavily on my heart the need of this type of school for training men for the preaching of the Gospel in these terrible days but I am not qualified to plan such a curriculum. I see this great need but I am not an educator, I must have the help of men of like vision.<sup>30</sup>

As Fuller's plans developed, he called a man he "slightly knew, to come and counsel with me and that man was Dr. Harold John Ockenga. I remember my surprise when I discovered that he had the same vision as mine and saw the same need—the need for a Seminary truly orthodox and with a high scholastic standard."<sup>31</sup>

Ockenga possessed highly regarded academic credentials. He had entered Princeton Seminary, but graduated from Westminster in 1930, following his studies under Machen and Van Til. He received a PhD from the University of Pittsburgh in 1939, while serving a local Presbyterian church in the Pittsburgh area. He was called in 1941 to be pastor of the prestigious Park Street Church in Boston. He was known as a vigorous leader with concrete evangelical credentials. Fuller knew of Ockenga's credentials, leadership skills, and reputation by way of his participation in the NEA.

Similarly, Ockenga and Henry had established a professional and personal relationship that began in the early 1940s via the NEA. Ockenga was the founding President, and Henry was a charter member, doing publicity work for the initial meeting

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<sup>29</sup> Joel Carpenter, "Fundamentalists Institutions and the Rise of Evangelical Protestantism, 1929-1942," *American Society of Church History* 49, no.1 (March 1980): 71.

<sup>30</sup> George M. Marsden, *Reforming Fundamentalism: Fuller Seminary and the New Evangelicalism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1987), 13.

<sup>31</sup> Garth M. Rosell, *The Surprising Work of God: Harold John Ockenga, Billy Graham, and the Rebirth of Evangelicalism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 201-02.

in St. Louis. Henry was a frequent contributor to the association's newsletter, *United Evangelical Action*, spoke at annual conventions, and chaired two committees.<sup>32</sup> While he was completing his PhD studies at Boston University in the mid 1940s, Ockenga invited him to preach at Park Street Church.<sup>33</sup> Moreover in 1947, Ockenga wrote the Introduction to Henry's second book, a small, but critically acclaimed book. Henry suggested that Fundamentalism was in danger of vanishing because it had ignored the social responsibility of the Gospel. In support of Henry's thesis, Ockenga wrote,

A Christian world-and-life-view embracing world questions, societal needs, personal education ought to arise out of Matt. 28:18-21 as much as evangelism does. Culture depends on such a view, and Fundamentalism is prodigally dissipating the Christian culture accretion of centuries, a serious sin. A sorry answer lies in the abandonment of social fields to the secularist. Here then is a healthy antidote to Fundamentalist aloofness in a distraught world.<sup>34</sup>

Henry contended in *Uneasy Conscience* that Fundamentalism was more interested in personal holiness than combating social evils, and more interested in the minutiae of the "hereafter" than advancing the kingdom of God in the "here and now." That made Fundamentalism's ethical and social commitment irrelevant because it trivialized the Gospel and abandoned social reform to the liberals. Yet, Fundamentalism could be reformed, if it recovered the evangelical social ethic of its historic past.<sup>35</sup> On the basis of his professional and personal relationship with Henry, Ockenga recruited Henry for the new seminary. More importantly, Ockenga's endorsement of Henry's book signaled two significant changes: (1) evangelicals had lost hope of unifying the fundamentalist movement. Fundamentalism required reformation, meaning the adoption of a social ethic

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<sup>32</sup> Augustus Cerillo, Jr. and Murray W. Dempster, "Carl F.H. Henry's Early Apologetic for an Evangelical Social Ethic, 1942-1956," *Journal of Evangelical Theology Society* 34, no.3 (September 1991): 367.

<sup>33</sup> Henry, *Confessions*, 105-06.

<sup>34</sup> Carl F. H. Henry, *The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism* (1947; Reprint, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003), xxi-xxii.

<sup>35</sup> Joel Carpenter, *Revive Us Again: The Reawakening of American Fundamentalism* (New York: Oxford Press, 1997), 200.

and moderation of the emphasis on premillennial dispensationalism, and (2) Henry was designated as a public voice for the evangelical cause.

In early 1947, Dr. Wilbur Smith, Professor at Moody Bible Institute, approached Henry and asked, "Has Harold Ockenga been in touch with you about a new seminary on the West Coast?" "No." replied Henry. A few months later, Smith again approached Henry, "I have some pictures of the new campus, and it is a veritable Garden of Eden." Humorously, Henry replied, "If so, there is a fall just around the corner."<sup>36</sup>

In April 1947, Ockenga wrote Henry and offered him "Professor of Theology and Dean of the Seminary. This is not a temporary position of Dean, but a permanent position and as the responsibilities increases you may make your choice either by going fulltime administrative work or by going fulltime teaching."<sup>37</sup> Henry responded,

The Pasadena venture strikes me at the point of intensest interest—a faculty of able men with the ability, time and means to devote themselves to the task of pacing the whole evangelical movement in furnishing an overall rationale of our position...I am pleased indeed that you thought of this unprofitable servant in conjunction with this proposed venture....While I am honored that you have thought of me in connection with the Deanship, would my name still be considered if, upon reflection, it seem a wiser investment of my effort...to concentrate on the teaching and writing phase?<sup>38</sup>

In May 1947, Fuller and Ockenga invited Smith, Henry, and Everett F. Harrison, New Testament Professor at Dallas Theological Seminary, to meet them in Chicago to discuss the launch of the new evangelical seminary. Fuller and Ockenga combined power and prestige. Fuller had the power of wealth, the Fuller Evangelistic Foundation, and the prestige of national radio fame. Ockenga had the prestige of intellect and the power of national evangelical support. Fuller therefore became Chairman of the Board and

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<sup>36</sup> Henry, *Confessions*, 113.

<sup>37</sup> Ockenga to Henry, April 19, 1947, Ockenga Collection. Letters quoted are from the Ockenga Collection housed at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, South Hamilton, MA, unless otherwise noted.

<sup>38</sup> Henry to Ockenga, April 24, 1947, Ockenga Collection.

Ockenga the President, but *in absentia*, of Fuller Theological Seminary. Harrison, Henry, and Smith became the founding faculty. Henry nominated Harold Lindsell, a Wheaton classmate, to be Registrar and teach Church History.

The founding faculty, Harrison, Henry, Lindsell, and Smith, was a diverse group.<sup>39</sup> Smith was senior and the most widely known evangelical scholar of the group. The future at Moody Bible Institute appeared stagnant because its President was dying. Thus, Smith eagerly joined Fuller where he perceived prospects to be more prosperous. He had little patience or talents for administration, but he did have the ear of the Fuller family. Harrison once thought that he might assume the presidency of Dallas. But his modest commitment to dispensationalism clashed with the Dallas dogmatists, and he found himself outside their inner circle of power. Thus, he needed a new venue. Lindsell was clearly junior, but blessed with sufficient administrative talents to handle the task of Registrar. He was intensely loyal to Ockenga, having just written a laudatory biography of Ockenga that presented him as a prophet who lived the cause of Christ positively through his preaching and his leadership of the NEA and Fuller.<sup>40</sup>

With Henry's intellectual leadership and communication skills, Ockenga clearly thought that he was the key to this group and the hope for a fresh evangelical perspective. Henry might be able to forge these diverse men with strong personal aspirations into a team through spiritual enthusiasm for a common evangelical vision.<sup>41</sup> Ockenga expressed this thought directly to Henry with these words of encouragement, "I believe with your spiritual and diplomatic sensibilities, the harmony of the faculty will be

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<sup>39</sup> For biographical information, see: T. Larson, *Biographical Dictionary of Evangelicals* (Dowers Grove, IL: IVP, 2003), s.v. "Harold Lindsell"; R. Balmer, *Encyclopedia of Evangelicalism* (Waco, TX: Baylor Press, 2004), s.v. "Everett F Harrison"; Wilbur Smith, *Before I Forget* (Chicago: Moody, 1971).

<sup>40</sup> Harold Lindsell, *Park Street Prophet: A Life of Harold Ockenga* (Wheaton, IL: Van Kampen, 1951).

<sup>41</sup> Gary Dorrien, *The Remaking of Evangelical Theology* (Louisville, KY: Westminster, 1998), 53.

promoted through your leadership.”<sup>42</sup> Henry was named Professor of Theology and Christian Philosophy. He reluctantly accepted the responsibility of acting Dean because the term of office appeared to be limited. Ockenga suggested, “I urge you to accept this combined responsibility in the formative years of the seminary while at least we are filling out the faculty.”<sup>43</sup> Since Ockenga was President *in absentia*, Henry most certainly functioned as an Executive Dean, and the intensity of that role probably increased his aversion to administrative work.

There were three principles that guided the formation of the new seminary. The first and most significant principle was advancing evangelical theology through uncompromising spiritual priorities. Ockenga used the term *neo-evangelical* in his opening address to the faculty and students, stressing that Fuller would support the authority of the Bible, a commitment to sound theology with an apologetic mission, and responsible Christian awareness for involvement in social issues.<sup>44</sup> Henry used the term *new evangelicalism*. He wrote, “new evangelicalism” is the “vital presentation of redemptive Christianity which does not obscure its philosophical implications, its social imperatives, its eschatological challenge, its ecumenical opportunity and its revelational base.”<sup>45</sup> His definition had more academic flare, but paralleled Ockenga’s.

The second principle was supporting an interdenominational culture. Staff and students shared a common theology, not merely a common denominational history or liturgy. This principle was expressed by Ockenga in this manner:

We intend to be ecclesiastically free. To cooperate with all evangelical denominations. It is our intention and desire that our students may come out from the

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<sup>42</sup> Ockenga to Henry, October 6, 1947, Ockenga Collection.

<sup>43</sup> Ockenga to Henry, April 24, 1947, Ockenga Collection.

<sup>44</sup> Marsden, *Reforming Fundamentalism*, 146n14.

<sup>45</sup> Carl F.H. Henry, “The Vigor of the New Evangelicalism,” *Christian Life*, April 1948, 69.

Denominations, and may go back to the Denominations to cooperate, to take a place of leadership, to infuse evangelical conviction and life and to strengthen the church that is. We repudiate the 'Come-outism' movement which brands all Denominations apostate.... We expect to develop a social theory which will express our Christian conviction on the burning issues of the hour.<sup>46</sup>

The first two principles, evangelical focus and interdenominational culture, precipitated caustic criticism from both liberals and Fundamentalists. As Ockenga wryly noted, "It is very interesting... that one who takes the middle of the road gets kicked from the right and the left.... Undoubtedly the easiest way to meet all your problems in this world is to take either the extreme right or left, but I do not think that position is pleasing to the Lord, and our calling and destiny is in His hands."<sup>47</sup>

The third principle was encouraging an environment of academic excellence and research. Fuller's first news release described the seminary as a "research center for evangelical scholarship." This theme was part of the seminary's advertising campaign, and was equally important to the faculty. Ockenga's initial approach to Henry suggested that teaching burdens would be eight to ten hours per semester with summers free. Faculty would be expected to publish a book in their field every two or three years. Henry recalled that professors thrived at Fuller because they were encouraged to write. "Everyone was perpetually at their typewriter or deep in drafts of manuscripts."<sup>48</sup> Each one working to make a contribution that the theological world would take seriously, that would signal a new evangelicalism that would begin a cultural renewal of the West. But this principle drew harsh criticism from some fundamentalist's elements, particularly Bob Jones, who went to great lengths to embarrass the seminary by suggesting that sustained

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<sup>46</sup> Rosell, *Surprising Work of God*, 176.

<sup>47</sup> Ockenga to Henry, December 20, 1947, Ockenga Collection.

<sup>48</sup> Carpenter, *Revive Us Again*, 195.



academic pursuit arose solely from intellectual pride.<sup>49</sup> Given these principles, support staff was hired and classes commenced in fall 1947.

Near the end of the first academic year, the mounting administrative problems of the new seminary began to frustrate Henry. Thus, Henry wrote Ockenga, “The administrative work of these recent weeks has been an oppressive nightmare to me... and has to some extent jeopardized [my] summer graduate program, though I hope it will not be necessary to prolong the work in Boston.”<sup>50</sup> To Henry’s relief, Ockenga responded by appointing Gleason Archer as Dean beginning fall 1948.

As America approached mid twentieth century, there were signs of a growing religious enthusiasm—new churches were built at an increasing rate, church membership soared past the fifty percent mark of the population, and Bible sales nearly doubled. Citywide revivals were regularly held in metropolitan areas, and well-known pastors and national evangelists such as Billy Graham, Bob Jones, Harold Ockenga, Merv Rosell, and Jack Schuler were heard in extended revival settings.<sup>51</sup>

Graham, the headliner for Youth for Christ in 1946 and 1947, became United Airlines’ most traveled passenger, visiting forty-seven states in a year. His critics said that he spoke too loud, too fast, and his gestures seemed unpolished and unconventional. But people listened to the tall willowy young man from North Carolina with the piercing eyes, wavy hair, and trumpet-like voice.<sup>52</sup> Graham’s earnestness and intensity were contagious, and the growing crowds were mesmerized by his message.

By fall 1948, Graham had left Youth for Christ to focus his energy and his team on

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<sup>49</sup> Henry, *Confessions*, 117.

<sup>50</sup> Henry to Ockenga, April 23, 1948, Ockenga Collection.

<sup>51</sup> Carpenter, *Revive Us Again*, 213-14.

<sup>52</sup> Carpenter, *Revive Us Again*, 217.

citywide revivals fulltime. In two years, Graham preached revivals in Birmingham, UK, Augusta, GA, Miami, FL, Baltimore, MD, Altoona, PA, before arriving in Los Angeles, CA. The original plans called for a three week revival in Southern California during September 1950. But following the conversion of Stuart Hamblen,<sup>53</sup> a Hollywood radio personality and the consequent national press coverage by *Time*, *Life* and the Hearst press, the revival was packed and extended for five additional weeks.<sup>54</sup>

The next revival for Graham was December 30, 1949 to January 8, 1950 in Boston under the sponsorship of Ockenga's Park Street Church. Thanks to the press coverage following the west coast revival, public interest was high and the six thousand seat Mechanics Hall was filled to capacity on the first night. And so it was at each venue—Park Street Church, Symphony Hall, and the Opera House. Thus, the revival was extended to January 16 and Boston Garden was rented. Sixteen thousand were seated in the arena, two thousand gathered in the lobby, and a crowd of ten thousand stood outside the gates. Fifteen hundred people came forward. A *Boston Globe* reporter wrote, "Those who cried looked as though they shed tears of relief or happiness. Others walked forward... as if they knew a long time ahead they were ready to look for the better life that Graham told them Jesus offered." That night, one in ten accepted Christ. During the revival, one hundred thousand attended and three thousand accepted Christ.<sup>55</sup>

It was impossible to rent additional facilities and extend the revival, so Graham and his team promised to return to New England in March 1950. Beginning March 28<sup>th</sup>,

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<sup>53</sup> Stuart Hamblen was an actor, singer, and song writer in the genre of Roy Rogers and Gene Autry. His best known song is "It Is No Secret (What God Can Do)" which was written following his conversion at the revival led by Billy Graham in 1949 in Los Angeles, CA. For more information concerning him, see <http://www.nashvillesongwritersfoundation.com/h-k/stuart-hamblen.aspx>

<sup>54</sup> Carpenter, *Revive Us Again*, 220-26.

<sup>55</sup> Carpenter, *Revive Us Again*, 226-28.

Graham preached to capacity filled venues from Portland ME to Bridgeport, CT, before arriving at Boston Garden, the final destination for four nights, April 19 to 22. Then on a chilly, rainy Sunday afternoon, April 23, Graham preached outdoors on Boston Commons to a crowd of some fifty thousand where Whitefield had once preached in 1740. Ockenga reported to the NEA that he was “hot from revival” in New England where Billy Graham was preaching. He said, “You don’t have to pray any more, ‘Lord, send a revival.’ The revival is here!” He insisted that no other moment in history could compare with what he had just witnessed. “The evangelist I have been working” with “was the one who has been anointed to bring revival to America.”<sup>56</sup>

One of the members of Ockenga’s church was Edward John Carnell, who like Henry studied at Wheaton under Gordon Clark and held a PhD from Boston University. Carnell, then teaching at Gordon Divinity, wrote Ockenga concerning employment at Fuller. “Henry is teaching both systematic theology and philosophy of religion. When he decides which field he would prefer, I would love to work over the other. I have equal training in systematic theology and philosophy of religion. Collaboration with Dr. Henry could mean the publication of a series of contemporary volumes of great worth.” Thus he joined Fuller in September 1948 and taught systematic theology, since the understanding

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<sup>56</sup> Carpenter, *Revive Us Again*, 229. Chapter Two’s conclusion suggested that three men would lead the Fourth Great Awakening. Ockenga is chronologically first because of his leadership of the NEA in 1942, and subsequent influence at Fuller Seminary, *Christianity Today*, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, and his roles with Henry and Graham. Henry is second because of his 1947 book, *The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism*, his role at Fuller seminary, his editorship at *Christianity Today*, and his leadership of various evangelical groups. Graham is third because of his crusades beginning in 1950, his leadership at *Christianity Today*, and his influence on world evangelism. But order does not necessarily designate achievement. In this case, the whole, as Aristotle noted, is greater than the sum of the parts. While individually each of these men was a remarkable human being, they were truly unique and achieved God’s will when they acted together under the empowerment of the Holy Spirit.

was that he would teach everything in theology that Henry did not desire to teach.<sup>57</sup>

Henry and Carnell were professional colleagues who became friends.

But an unexpected event occurred in October 1954 that changed their relationship and the future of the seminary. Since Ockenga would not relocate to Pasadena, he was vacating the presidency to become Chairman of the Board. Under the guise of seeking Henry's advice concerning presidential candidates, Ockenga and Fuller approached Henry. Henry recommended Gaebelein, but they pressed him for internal candidates. Henry then suggested Woodbridge. Fuller and Ockenga mentioned Carnell's name and asked for Henry's view. Henry did not favor Carnell for several reasons.<sup>58</sup> Any "inside" candidate would likely cause controversy with elements of the right and left; the seminary could not afford the loss of Carnell's scholarship or teaching schedule; Carnell lacked the essential administrative and fund raising skills required by the presidency; and Carnell had little pastoral skills or the personality for the role. Henry was then informed that Carnell would be appointed, and he must have been stunned or embarrassed, considering his own scholarly qualifications, experience as acting dean, pastoral skills, and personality. Given that the decision was already a closed matter, Henry later indicated that he would have preferred not to have been asked for his counsel.<sup>59</sup>

Like Henry, Wilbur Smith was notified of the impending appointment of Carnell. But neither knew that Ockenga had discussed the presidency with Carnell six months earlier in May 1954. A letter from Carnell confirmed the May discussion, "I would like to release you from any unspoken commitments of last May... The matter of the

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<sup>57</sup> Rudolph Nelson, *The Making and Unmaking of an Evangelical Mind: The Case of Edward Carnell* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 70.

<sup>58</sup> Henry, *Confessions*, 139-140.

<sup>59</sup> Nelson, *Making and Unmaking*, 90.

presidency must be decided in another way....Let us consider the discussion of last May a closed question, and let it be a warm memory to be shared by us alone. And by Dr. Smith, who found out somehow.”<sup>60</sup> Nor was Carnell confident that he was suited for the presidency, “I have spent \$40,000 on my fourteen years of education beyond high school....In conscience before God I simply cannot throw this away for an office in which I have to decide how many dozen towels the school should order.”<sup>61</sup> More importantly, Carnell also suspected his presidency might not be received favorably by the faculty, particularly Henry.

If I were president, I would only irritate them [the faculty]; for I refuse to be party to their fantastic schemes. Dr. Henry, I am sure would be crushed. He continually speaks about the new president in promotional terms. And if I interpret his inferences correctly, there is only one man who (in your place) can speak for the world evangelicals: and that is the speaker himself, CFH....Dr. Henry is very capable, but he tends to think things through to their logical conclusion from the point of view of Dr. Henry....So I withdraw my name from the list.<sup>62</sup>

Despite Carnell’s reservations, Ockenga persisted and announced Carnell’s elevation on October 1954. Following the appointment, Carnell wrote Gordon Clark, his former mentor, “The situation was such that I simply could not sit back and watch the school go into the wrong hands by default....To see this school fall into the hands of those who would let it develop into a mediocre, fundamentalist institution, would be more than I could stand.”<sup>63</sup> It may be concluded that Carnell accepted the presidency not with confidence, but with a sense of sacrifice. After the appointment, the Henry-Carnell relationship deteriorated, as did the general fellowship of the faculty.<sup>64</sup>

In summer 1955, following Carnell’s first year as President, Henry received a copy of

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<sup>60</sup> Carnell to Ockenga, September 15, 1954, Ockenga Collection.

<sup>61</sup> Carnell to Ockenga, September 22, 1954, Ockenga Collection.

<sup>62</sup> Carnell to Ockenga, September 15, 1954, Ockenga Collection.

<sup>63</sup> Nelson, *Making and Unmaking*, 91.

<sup>64</sup> Marsden, *Reforming Fundamentalism*, 139-43.

a letter written by Billy Graham concerning the proposed establishment of a new evangelical magazine. Graham and Henry were well known to each other. At Wheaton in the early 1940s, Graham, Henry, their friends, and their future wives traveled in the same social circles.<sup>65</sup> Both Graham and Henry were preachers in the Youth for Christ organization in the middle 1940s. While Graham was a fulltime employee and attracted the larger crowds, Henry often preached to crowds of 1500 in St. Louis, Detroit, Cleveland, and Indianapolis.<sup>66</sup> But their friendship was solidified when Graham returned to Southern California for the Rose Bowl Rally in September 1950, following Graham's successful crusade in Los Angeles in 1949. Henry and the Fuller staff helped organize the Rose bowl event. The press reported attendance at fifty thousand, noting such was the largest religious gathering in the Pacific Southwest. Graham's expressed his appreciation by inviting Henry to speak at the W. B. Riley lecture at Northwestern School, a Bible college where Graham had recently and reluctantly become President.<sup>67</sup>

As early as 1953, Graham envisioned reaching large audiences more frequently than crusades permitted by employing the printed word. Graham visualized a magazine that would be the "best news coverage of any religious magazine," that would be "a focal point for the best in evangelical scholarship," that would be "aimed primarily at ministers," that would "restore respectability and spiritual impact to evangelical Christianity," and that would "reaffirm the power of the Word of God to redeem and transform men and women."<sup>68</sup>

Graham could not assume the burden of managing the magazine in addition to his

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<sup>65</sup> Billy Graham, *Just as I Am: The Autobiography of Billy Graham* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1997), 74.

<sup>66</sup> Henry, *Confessions*, 105.

<sup>67</sup> Henry, *Confessions*, 125-26.

<sup>68</sup> Graham, *Just as I Am*, 286.

evangelistic responsibilities. For assistance, he initially turned to Nelson Bell, his father-in-law, who had writing and editing experience with *The Presbyterian Journal*. Later, he enlisted Ockenga of Fuller and J. Howard Pew, the Sun Oil magnate.

In January 1955, Harold Lindsell, Graham's friend from Wheaton and now Dean at Fuller, suggested Henry as editor. Lindsell wrote, Henry "has tremendous insight into the application of the Gospel to the social problems of the day and he also has an awareness of the weakness of fundamentalism along with a keen insight into the problems of neoorthodoxy, liberalism, and conservative Christianity." Graham thought *Christian Century*, the liberal voice of Christianity, was excellent in spreading liberalism in popular language, and "coveted the same effectiveness" for the evangelical magazine. Graham wrote Lindsell, acknowledging Henry's journalism experience, but noted that he "has a tendency to be rather heavy...and though I am a minister of average intelligence, it has been very difficult for me to follow [him]."<sup>69</sup> Graham told Lindsell that the magazine must plant "the evangelical flag in the middle of the road, taking a conservative theological position, but a definite liberal approach to social problems. It would combine the best of liberalism and fundamentalism without compromising theologically."<sup>70</sup>

In June 1955, Henry received a letter written by Graham that praised him. "I do not know any man in evangelical circles with whom I could agree theologically more than Carl Henry. I do not believe we could find a more dedicated, yielded, Spirit-filled, gracious man of God than Carl. I have profound respect for him. He has a great love for evangelism." But Graham expressed some concerns: (1) would Henry realize the problem to be addressed was gaining wider acceptance of biblical authority, (2) would

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<sup>69</sup> Graham, *Just as I Am*, 286-89.

<sup>70</sup> Marsden, *Reforming Fundamentalism*, 158.

Henry's well-known conservatism compromise his editorial image, and (3) would Henry's intellectual sophistication preclude popular communication?<sup>71</sup>

Henry acknowledged Graham's letter with appreciation, suggesting he was not a candidate for the job, but could offer counsel to Graham. In early August, Henry wrote Graham, advising him that the magazine could not afford "to introduce a sturdy theology by degrees." He said, "The truth is still the indispensable factor in Christian apologetics: truth without love will usually be ignored, but love without truth is not even love."<sup>72</sup> He was then invited to visit Graham in North Carolina in late August.

A Labor Day meeting with the Board of the new magazine was held in New York at the Staler Hilton Hotel. Several items were agreed: Ockenga was elected Chairman; the magazine was named *Christianity Today*; the initial circulation was set at 200,000 with publication to begin thirteen months hence in October 1956; the office was to open by April 1956; and Henry was elected Editor reporting to Ockenga. Henry's regard for Ockenga was apparently undamaged by the "Carnell affair" at Fuller. This reveals his enduring esteem for Ockenga, "There is not another solid evangelical in the whole of America that has the vision, the courage, and the ability God has entrusted to you."<sup>73</sup>

Henry described the magazine as "transcontinental, interdenominational, theologically affirmative, socially aggressive, irenic, and humanly speaking, the needed note for the hour."<sup>74</sup> Graham sounded a parallel note suggesting that the distinguishing marks of *Christianity Today* were "a commitment to the trustworthiness of Scripture as the Word of God.", and an editorial strategy that instead of "the stick of denunciation

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<sup>71</sup> Henry, *Confessions*, 141.

<sup>72</sup> Henry, *Confessions*, 142.

<sup>73</sup> Henry to Ockenga, September 15, 1951, Ockenga Collection.

<sup>74</sup> Henry, *Confessions*, 145.



and criticism, we would present a positive and constructive program... that would lead and love rather than vilify, criticize, and beat."<sup>75</sup> The initial editorial appropriately reflected the joint vision of Graham and Henry:

*Christianity Today* has its origin in a deepfelt desire to express historical Christianity to the present generation. Neglected, slighted, misrepresented—evangelical Christianity needs a clear voice, to speak with conviction and love, and to state its position and its relevance to the world crisis. A generation has grown up unaware of the basic truths of the Christian faith taught in the Scriptures and expressed in the creeds of historic evangelical churches... *Christianity Today* is confident that the answer to the theological confusion existing in the world is found in Christ and the Scriptures... Revival as the answer to national problems may seem to be an oversimplified solution to a distressingly complex situation. Nevertheless statesmen as well as theologians realize the basic solution to the world crisis is theological. *Christianity Today* will stress the impact of evangelism on life and will encourage it... This we undertake with sincere Christian love for those who may differ with us and with whom we may be compelled to differ.<sup>76</sup>

By using a summer vacation and a sabbatical year, May 1956 to September 1957, Henry assumed the role of midwife for the successful birth of Graham's journalistic child.

Yet as 1957 began, Henry faced a dilemma. The Seminary prayed earnestly that their professor would return, while the magazine's Board optimistically hoped their editor would remain. Ockenga described the conflict that he and Henry faced:

I want you to know that I think you have done a superb work on *Christianity Today*. I think that you have all the abilities and gifts to see this thing through with success. I think you are the best man in the country for the job of Editor and I know that the Board is quite happy with your work. Because they may make suggestions and hold conferences in order to get the mind of the ministers in reference to their needs does not impugn your own ability or leadership. We are hoping that you will stay permanently with the magazine. On the other hand, as President of the board of Fuller, it will be a great loss at Fuller if you stay with the magazine and I know that everybody at the seminary wants you to remain there. You have a difficult decision and I trust that it will be made under the guidance of the Lord.<sup>77</sup>

For Henry, the issue to remain or return rested on: (1) clarifying the meaning of and

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<sup>75</sup> Graham, *Just as I Am*, 291-92.

<sup>76</sup> Carl F. H. Henry, "Why 'Christianity Today'?" *Christianity Today*, October 15, 1956, 20-21.

<sup>77</sup> Ockenga to Henry, February 1, 1957, Ockenga Collection.

securing a mutual understanding of editorial authority, and (2) God's will. He addressed this with the Board, "The Board will need to decide... whether it regards as permanently ideal the present division of authority, or whether *Christianity Today* would be advantaged through an editor-in-chief bearing both the full authority and responsibility for content. Editorial integrity requires a strict balance of responsibility and authority."<sup>78</sup>

The division of authority noted by Henry above refers to the intrusions in the editorial process by Bell and Pew. So disruptive were these intrusions that Henry wrote Carnell, "If alternative leadership were in sight for the months immediately ahead, I would return gladly to my teaching." The Board, sensing Henry's frustration, granted him the title of Editor-in-Chief with parallel authority, and elected him to the Board. They requested that Ockenga ask the seminary to extend Henry's leave of absence.<sup>79</sup>

As the magazine's second year of operations began in October 1957, Henry relocated his family from Pasadena, California to Arlington, Virginia. He began working fifteen hour days and traveled extensively in order to build the magazine's image and circulation. As the third year of operation began in October 1958, the magazine and seminary again pressed Henry for a long term commitment by December 31, 1958.

The Fuller students sent a telegram urging Henry to return. Graham wrote Henry urging him to remain, "I do not have enough adjectives to describe how pleased I am with the progress of *Christianity Today*.... There can be no doubt in your mind but what this was God's place for you. I am convinced that there is no single ministry... that carries such responsibility and opportunity as yours."<sup>80</sup>

As the decision time approached, Henry wrote Ockenga,

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<sup>78</sup> Henry, *Confessions*, 170.

<sup>79</sup> Henry, *Confessions*, 171.

<sup>80</sup> Henry, *Confessions*, 180-81.

All the inner tugs, Harold, are toward the seminary with its opportunities for reflective study, creative thought, academic interchange, precise formulation. On the other side stands only the evangelical movement's need of a larger voice, to which I might still contribute in some measure without sacrifice of professional harmony and a technical academic contribution. Pray for us in the valley.... We are unmoved by financial considerations.... We ask only one thing: what God wants for us.<sup>81</sup>

Ockenga, of course, kept Carnell informed of the latest developments with Henry:

It is my personal opinion that Carl Henry is leaning toward returning to Fuller next fall.... We are putting great pressure on him to stay with *Christianity Today*.... I communicated to him and the Board that you did not want anybody with Fuller part-time... so that option is out. However, Mr. Pew put strong pressure on me... to work out some kind of compromise.<sup>82</sup>

Carnell responded to Ockenga and made his position abundantly clear.

As for Carl Henry, let me say that I can not and will not relax my standards of evangelical scholarship.... In having said this, I am quite prepared to enter into a working compromise with *Christianity Today*. I herewith offer a third year leave of absence.... The third year leave of absence is offered with the expectation that Carl Henry plans to give himself fully to either *Christianity Today* or Fuller Theological Seminary.... As long as I am president, there will be no "deals" with Carl Henry.<sup>83</sup>

Henry was apparently not satisfied with the situation and approached Carnell directly.

Carnell then informed Ockenga of this development.

Since Carl Henry has been in correspondence with me on the possibility of working out a deal of some sort, I have had to be forthright in my communication with him likewise. I reviewed the substance of my policy to him and also indicated the willingness to extend his absence for another year. I told him that in any event we should look to a firm decision either to remain with the paper or return to the seminary.<sup>84</sup>

Following the above discussions and prayer, Henry decided to remain with the magazine and therefore severed his ties with Fuller Seminary. The magazine Board reciprocated with a three year contract that would expired on September 30, 1961.

At the fourth operating anniversary, Henry wrote, "We shall endeavor...not to

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<sup>81</sup> Henry to Ockenga, December 1957, Ockenga Collection.

<sup>82</sup> Ockenga to Carnell, January 7, 1958, Ockenga Collection.

<sup>83</sup> Carnell to Ockenga, January 13, 1958, Ockenga Collection.

<sup>84</sup> Carnell to Ockenga, January 21 1958, Ockenga Collection.

sidestep with the temptation to self congratulation... The past months have seen gains far beyond our original hopes”<sup>85</sup> In four years, the magazine exceeded its goals, particularly in regard to paid circulation, network interviews, and appraisals by independent sources when compared to its competitor, *Christian Century*. Typical of the laudatory press was this comment by *Time Magazine*,

It is a magazine of evangelical Christianity that tries to make Protestant theology clear and interesting—and nearly always succeeds... *Christianity Today* has included an impressive sample of the kind of alert religious reporting and comment that makes the magazine indispensable... reading in manses and seminaries across the U.S... preaching a kind of literate, highbrow fundamentalism.<sup>86</sup>

As the expiry date of the employment contract neared in 1961, Henry expressed reasonable employment concerns—limited editorial staff and a desire for a sabbatical year. Henry suggested that the Board could name an acting editor, if a sabbatical were granted, in which case he would be happy to return, or a permanent editor if they so wished. Ockenga wrote Henry in March 1961 noting that he was troubled by Henry’s “apparent willingness to leave *Christianity Today* for a year’s rest... regardless of whether the work was adequately covered, and regardless of any commitment to return.” And he noted, “The magazine is the best sounding board you will ever have.”<sup>87</sup> Graham also wrote Henry, noting that *Christianity Today* had “far surpassed my earliest and fondest dreams largely due to your editorial leadership.”<sup>88</sup> Graham therefore orchestrated a reasonable plan to satisfy Henry’s concerns. The Board passed the needed resolutions that authorized Henry to hire an editorial associate, an editorial assistant, and a research assistant at competitive market salaries. Henry was granted a nine month sabbatical to

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<sup>85</sup> Carl F. H. Henry, “Fourth Anniversary Observations,” *Christianity Today*, October 10, 1960, 25.

<sup>86</sup> *Time Magazine*, “Religion: Conservatism Today,” July 13, 1962. <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,827412,00.html> [accessed July 27, 2009].

<sup>87</sup> Henry, *Confessions*, 203.

<sup>88</sup> Henry, *Confessions*, 204.

commence when staffing was completed. A compensation increase was authorized for Henry, but he declined it to demonstrate that his concern was staffing, not salary.

Following the Board meeting, Ockenga wrote Henry, "I rejoice that you have had the issues resolved in relationship to *Christianity Today*....I sincerely hope you can find the help you need." Ockenga signed the letter, "With best wishes to you, rejoicing in your permanent relationship to *Christianity Today*"<sup>89</sup>

Ockenga learned that Trinity Divinity and several other seminaries had been pursuing Henry. Thus in August 1963, prior to Henry's long-awaited and much needed sabbatical trip, Ockenga outlined a proposal that he hoped would encourage Henry to remain long term with the magazine. By then appropriate staff had been acquired; Frank Gaebelein had joined the magazine's editorial team and Harold Lindsell was expected to join in fall 1964. Since Henry and Gaebelein were old friends, Henry discussed Ockenga's proposal with Gaebelein, noting that he would respond during his sabbatical.

In October 1963, Henry and his wife departed for a nine month trip that he later called *A Workaholic's Sabbatical*.<sup>90</sup> They traveled to twenty-one countries by way of Africa, the Middle East, Asia, Europe, and Great Britain. In Africa, they stopped in Liberia to visit their son, Paul, who was stationed in Moravia with the Peace Corps.<sup>91</sup> They journeyed next to Cameroon, where Helga was born and her father was buried. The

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<sup>89</sup> Henry, *Confessions*, 206-07.

<sup>90</sup> This is the title of Chapter Eleven of Henry's autobiography.

<sup>91</sup> Two children were born to the Henry family; Paul Brentwood born in 1942 and Carol Jennifer born in 1944. Both children were academically and musically gifted, and both confessed Jesus Christ as Savior at an early age. Paul graduated from Wheaton with a BA and then did graduate work at Duke University earning an MA and PhD. He served two years in the Peace Corps in Liberia and Ethiopia. He was a professor of political science at Calvin College, before his election to the Michigan State Senate. He then was elected to the US House of Representative and served 4 terms prior to his tragic death from cancer at age 51. See Paul B. Henry, *Politics for Evangelicals* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1974). Carol graduated from Wheaton College with a BA, and did graduate work in music at Indiana University, earning a PhD in musicology. She married (Bates) and began a family and teaching career which included Houghton College and the University of South Carolina at Columbia.

balance of the trip was spent meeting theologians and scholars of various persuasions, contributing editors of *Christianity Today*, and writing columns for the magazine. Of interest were interviews he conducted with Barth, Brunner, Bultmann, and Pannenburg.

Ockenga's letter of January 1964 reached Henry while he was in Greece. The letter assured him that the Board was prepared to be quite generous, since, "We want you at C.T." Henry responded that he was willing to make the Board's proposal work, if appropriate staff were available.<sup>92</sup> The Henry's arrived home on July 4, 1964, just in time for him to attend a Board Meeting on July 8.

Graham yearned for a global gathering on evangelism, but he feared that such an event would be dismissed as organizationally self-serving, if the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association sponsored it. Following discussions with Henry, they agreed that *Christianity Today* would sponsor a global Congress on evangelism in celebration of its tenth anniversary in 1966 and Henry would serve as Chairman of the event.

Henry's willingly assumed the chairmanship of *Berlin /1966* as a consequence of his theology, rather than his employment relationship or friendship with Graham. In 1948, Henry wrote, "The prophetic and the social messages," of the gospel "find their major key" when the individual sinner trusts "in the redemptive work of Christ. This Gospel, when "once it enlists the social man in the regenerate life, orients him properly both to this world and to the next....the gospel is still relevant to every problem that vexes the two billion inhabitants of an apprehensive globe."<sup>93</sup> Henry believed that evangelism was an effective expression of evangelicalism, because evangelicalism holds equal regard for the apostolic and apocalyptic messages of the Gospel.

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<sup>92</sup> Henry, *Confessions*, 233-34.

<sup>93</sup> Carl F. H. Henry, "The Vigor of the New Evangelicalism," *Christian Life*, January 1948, 32.

Stan Mooneyham, who had worked with the NEA as editor of *United Evangelical Action* and then in the Graham organization specializing in international conferences, served as the Congress Coordinator and effectively linked the resources of Henry's and Graham's organizations. Planning began in September 1964 in New York and continued for two years. Thus, *Berlin/1966—One Race, One Gospel, One Task* was booked for the *Kongresshalle*, adjacent to the Berlin Wall near the Brandenburg Gate, from October 25 to November 4, 1966.<sup>94</sup>

The Congress welcomed twelve hundred evangelists from more than one hundred nations to participate in Bible studies, read position papers, and listen to panel discussions and addresses in four languages. The Congress attracted world wide press coverage. Johnson wrote that the Congress was “one of the most remarkable evangelical events in modern Christian history because there was a spiritual impact transcending preparation.” He commended its content for “the clear, unconfused, dynamic, and biblical simplicity that propelled a revival in North America... a biblical freshness seemed to dissipate the dense clouds of theological ambiguity, scholasticism, and equivocation so characteristic of western assemblies.”<sup>95</sup> This was a successful and significant event for Graham, Henry, their respective organizations, and the participants.

However, ominous storm clouds had gathered in the vicinity of the magazine. At the June 1964 Board meeting, Pew, Editorial Committee member and major donor to the magazine, submitted an article highly critical of the church's involvement in political-economic affairs. Gaebelein, the acting Editor, since Henry was on sabbatical, included the article in the scheduled July 3<sup>rd</sup> issue as instructed, but in a secondary position. Pew

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<sup>94</sup> Henry, *Confessions*, 352.

<sup>95</sup> Arthur P. Johnson, *The Battle for World Evangelism* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1978), 157-58.

and some others thought it should be the lead article.<sup>96</sup> Gaebelein believed that such would represent poor editorial strategy. When Pew and his followers protested, Gaebelein replied that he was following the same editorial instincts that Henry would use. Pew then commented to Graham, "We've got to get rid of Carl."<sup>97</sup>

Pew realized that the magazine would not champion his personal agenda under Henry's editorship. Even as Pew began to question the effectiveness of his financial support, Henry refused to compromise the agreed editorial guidelines. Henry wrote,

Mr. Pew, you are the wealthiest man I know and one of the most reflective laymen I know, as well as a man of eminence in the business world and a humble believer. I have in common with you the last and greatest distinction, but not the others, but there is one fact about my relationship with *Christianity Today* that has given me full courage across these years to speak the truth in our relationship and to be moved by nothing else—and that is the fact that I have never really hung up my hat here in Washington but have renewed my relationship to journalism rather than to education year by year...I know that in the last analysis God will judge you, and he will judge me for the special stewardship that he has entrusted to each of us, and that it is only his verdict that is finally important.<sup>98</sup>

Like unseen termites, three unresolved problems had weakened the magazine's organizational structure. First, there was a division of Board opinion concerning the target readership. Pew believed that the readership should be clergy, while others thought the primary readership should be laity. Under Henry's leadership the primary audience was clergy and learned laity. Second, editorial authority and process were ill defined. Bell's editorial title, Executive Editor, was useful in attracting donors and contributions to the magazine. But he considered Henry's title, Editor-in-Chief, pretentious. Bell believed editorial authority should be shared, while Henry did not share Bell's belief. Henry was a member of the Board, but Bell was a member of the Executive

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<sup>96</sup> For biographical information, see John H. Pew and Mary Sennholtz, *Faith and Freedom: The Journal of a Great American, J. Howard Pew* (Grove City, PA: Grove City Press, 1975).

<sup>97</sup> Henry, *Confessions*, 251.

<sup>98</sup> Henry, *Confessions*, 268.



Committee of the Board that had power over Henry and his budget. Third, Bell's role as Secretary-Treasurer of the Board was an asset in keeping donors aware of the financial needs of the magazine. But it was also a liability to Henry, if Bell misrepresented the staff or budgetary needs of the editorial function. In their relationship, Bell viewed Henry as a brilliant intellectual, prone to perfectionism, but not very pliable. Bell conceived his role as a facilitator of interpersonal relationships with the Board.<sup>99</sup>

By the late 1960s, Henry had abandoned his vision of a Christian university, due to disputes about location and practical problems of attracting a first-rate faculty.<sup>100</sup> But he continued to hope that a Christian study and research center could be established. The Institute for Advanced Christian Studies was searching the Midwest for a site to locate a research center. The thought lingered in Henry's mind to apply for a \$12,000 grant from the Lilly Endowment for an eight month research grant to explore the feasibility of planning a World Student Congress on Evangelism in 1970-71 in connection with the opening of a Center for Advanced Christian Studies. Henry discussed the idea with Ockenga in April 1967, writing him that the possibility of the grant was remote. In any event, it would be at least eighteen months distant before the study might commence, so no Board action seemed necessary at this time. Ockenga replied that Henry should alert the Executive Committee, and added, "We ought to keep you in connection with the magazine," even if you were to get "a three year research and writing grant."<sup>101</sup> At the next meeting, the Board, with Ockenga absent, granted the Executive Committee the authority to revise the editorial relationship should a grant emerge and Henry accept it.

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<sup>99</sup> Henry, *Confessions*, 182-83.

<sup>100</sup> Carl F. H. Henry, "Evangelical Advance: Do We Need a Christian University?" *Christianity Today*, May 9, 1960, 3-5.; "Why a Christian University?" *Christianity Today*, October 10, 1960, 24-25.

<sup>101</sup> Henry, *Confessions*, 273.

Following that Board meeting, Henry received a highly critical letter from Ockenga in May 1967. Ockenga suggested that Henry was participating in evangelical activities beyond the needs of the magazine with an adverse consequence on staff morale. Ockenga also suggested that during the “transition period,” Henry should limit his activities to those directly related to the magazine’s interests. Henry discussed Ockenga’s letter with Bell. Bell candidly admitted that his personal comments to the Board had been misunderstood, and that he would attempt to rectify the situation.

For a number of reasons, the organizational structure of *Christianity Today* was dreadfully deficient and made the editorial function difficult to perform without consequent human stress. First, Bell should never serve on Henry’s staff and concurrently serve as his superior via the Executive Committee of the Board. This frequently allowed Bell to represent the editorial function privately before the Board. Second, the Board had an Editorial Committee that frequently exceeded the boundaries of policy making. Members reviewed articles before being published, and Bell facilitated this undesirable practice. Third, while Graham was the founder and Pew the major donor, the magazine represented the personal ministry and passion of Bell. Therefore, Henry was under constant surveillance by Bell. Bell and, too a lesser extent, Pew appear to be the proximate cause of this administrative tragedy, but Graham and Ockenga had the knowledge, responsibility and power to correct this unprofessional situation.<sup>102</sup>

On July 18, 1967 Ockenga, writing as Chairman of the Board, informed Henry that the Executive Committee considered Henry’s intention to return to the academic field, if and when a proper opening was available. Therefore, “The Executive Committee agreed unanimously to relieve you of all editorial responsibility not later than July, 1968.

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<sup>102</sup> Dorrien, *Remaking of Evangelical Theology*, 104-05.

Provision was made that your salary was to be paid in full for the year 1968 and remuneration after 1968 was to be made commensurate with services to the magazine.”<sup>103</sup>

Since Henry had not resigned, nor discussed another position with anyone, or even applied for the Lilly research grant, he was bewildered. Thus, he immediately sought clarification from Ockenga and other Board members. Was he being asked to resign or being fired? On what grounds was this action warranted? Several weeks of silence passed. Henry again wrote to Ockenga, “This ambiguity weighs heavily on me.” Ockenga finally responded on August 15, “We all understood that it was your desire in the fall of 1968 to be released in order to return to the academic field. It was on this presumption that we acted. We have a board meeting on the 21st of September and I will be glad to have the whole situation reviewed at that time and thoroughly clarified.”<sup>104</sup>

The facts as Henry understood them were summarized in his response to Ockenga,

After ten years of service, my relationship to the magazine was not only summarily ended without consultation or reason, but in the absence of a resignation and without agreement on a public announcement....Information was leaked to Christian leaders (from whom I had inquiry) before a letter dated July 18 reached me almost a month after the Executive Committee’s action. Even, the letter of dismissal was not marked confidential, and was opened and read by secretarial staff before it came to me.<sup>105</sup>

At the meeting, Henry, said, “Discussion of Dr. Ockenga’s letter and the Executive’s Committee action would not...set ahead the course of the magazine. It is better that embarrassment fall upon me rather than others or dividing the Board. I urge you to proceed with matters that grow out of this severance.”<sup>106</sup>

After some private deliberation, the Board told Henry that they held him in high personal regard; that they admired his editorial work; and that there had been a sad and

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<sup>103</sup> Henry, *Confessions*, 274.

<sup>104</sup> Henry, *Confessions*, 275.

<sup>105</sup> Henry, *Confessions*, 276.

<sup>106</sup> Henry, *Confessions*, 280. Henry demonstrates the Christian virtue of turning the other cheek.

colossal misunderstanding. The Board proposed to continue Henry as Editor, if he would make it his life vocation. Henry thanked the Board for their expression of confidence, but for the good of the magazine he declined their offer of continued employment. Henry indicated that it would be difficult to recapture the personal relationships he once enjoyed with certain influential Board members.<sup>107</sup> Moreover, he could not accept a condition that precluded consideration of future career alternatives.

The storm that began with Pew's thunder bolt remark in summer 1963 now engulfed Henry, Ockenga, Graham, and the Board by summer 1967. Shortly thereafter, an Editor's Note hinted at the storm's damage. Henry wrote, "The other night I decided the time had come for a new pair of size 13 slippers.... There'll come a time, I know, to live in slippers and hang up my hat. I hope that heaven will offer built-in opportunities for research and reflection... Elton Trueblood once remarked that a real editor needs to be a liberated man. The trick is to be liberated without being prematurely liquidated."<sup>108</sup> The evangelical world remained unaware of the storm's damage until December 30, 1967. The *Washington Post* heralded the news, "Editor Plans to Resign for Study."<sup>109</sup> The paper described Henry's importance as, "Next to Evangelist Billy Graham, Dr. Henry is widely regarded as the most influential leader in American evangelical Protestantism today." The same day, *The New York Times* announced, "Evangelical Leader Quitting Editorship," noting that Henry was impatient with desk-confining routines and was seeking a "deeper role in the modern crisis in theology."<sup>110</sup> In an Editor's Note in the January edition, Henry wrote,

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<sup>107</sup> Henry, *Confessions*, 282.

<sup>108</sup> Carl F. H. Henry, "Editor's Note," *Christianity Today*, August 18, 1967, 2.

<sup>109</sup> "Christianity Today Editor Plans to Resign for Study," *Washington Post*, December 30, 1967.

<sup>110</sup> "Evangelical Leader Quitting Editorship for Theological Study," *The New York Times*, December 30, 1967.

Among my New Year's resolutions is one for fuller involvement at the frontiers of the current theological crisis... I have therefore decided to relinquish the editorship of *Christianity Today*... to give these next years to theological research and writing.... The July 5 issue will be the last for which I am to bear editorial responsibility, and it will signal my greater freedom for creative work.<sup>111</sup>

The Board granted Henry severance consisting of a research grant and writing stipend.

Eventually, Harold Lindsell succeeded Henry as Editor of the magazine.

In retrospect, what shocked Henry most about his departure was that he received three letters from friends in June 1967 indicating that the Board was searching for his replacement and expressing sorrow that he was leaving the magazine. Since Henry had no personal knowledge, he assured them there was nothing to these rumors. But when Ockenga informed Henry in August 1967 that he was indeed to be replaced, he was sickened with humiliation. And consequently, he suffered a sharp weight loss of thirty pounds. When the Mayo Clinic staff expressed concern, he replied, "I was disappointed by some Christian friends and lost faith in them. That is all I want to say about it." Some assumed his departure was due to his accommodation of ecumenical groups, while not sufficiently supporting conservative causes.<sup>112</sup> Henry concluded, "We were more disenchanted and disillusioned than we were crushed. I knew God had a purpose.... The disappointment was wholly with men in certain groups. Men acting in groups sometimes engage in actions they would not pursue in personal dealings with their neighbor."<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Carl F. H. Henry, "Editor's Note," *Christianity Today*, January 5, 1968, 2.

<sup>112</sup> For an alternative explanation of Henry's termination, see George M. Marsden, *Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1991), 74. Marsden suggests that Pew demanded that evangelicals take pronationalist and procapitalist positions. Henry, a staunch Republican, was apparently unwilling to be militant in his writing and therefore lost his job. Pew was happier with Henry's replacement, Harold Lindsell, in that regard.

<sup>113</sup> Chandler, *The Overcomers*, 33-35.

## Sowing Seeds: 1968 to 1987

In fall 1968, the Henrys fled Washington, D.C. for Cambridge, England where he could do research and writing. Henry had in mind two basic theological ideas. The first thesis was epistemological in nature. If humans are able to say anything authentic about God, then they do so only because of God reveals himself. The second thesis was ontological in nature. In his self-revelation, God must possess supreme authority over humans and their environment. The three key nouns in these two theses, “God”, “Revelation”, and “Authority”, eventually became the title of Henry’s six volume series that defined evangelical theology. While at Cambridge, Henry wrote a portion of the first volume, outlined the second volume, and defined the underlying theses for the remaining volumes. He also conducted a lecture series and wrote *Footnotes*, his new column in the magazine that began in March 1969.

Several schools pressed Henry with employment offers—Western Kentucky, Trinity Divinity, Eastern Baptist, and the newly merged Gordon-Conwell where the likely President was to be Ockenga. Ockenga asked Henry to consider a position at the seminary and Helga a position at Gordon College. But there were reasons that caused Henry to be less interested in Gordon-Conwell and more interested in Eastern Baptist. Helga had taught at Eastern Baptist from 1961 to 1966 and was elected a Trustee. In addition, Helga’s brother, Thorwald, was a professor of theology at Eastern Baptist. So after being renewed in spirit and refreshed in body within the cloistered environment of Cambridge, the Henrys returned to the city of brotherly love and home of Eastern Baptist to take residence, where they hoped to begin a new academic life in September 1969.

Initially, Henry taught fulltime at Eastern Baptist, as visiting professor of theology. Later, he taught fall semesters at Eastern Baptist and spring semesters at Trinity Divinity, while writing between semesters. This serene state ended following the 1973 academic year, when Henry resigned from Eastern Baptist due to the faculty's ambiguous stance concerning biblical errors and misunderstanding of the term *evangelical*.<sup>114</sup>

In the late 1960s, several organizations recognized Henry's leadership capacity. Henry assisted in establishing the Institute for Advanced Christian Studies and served on its first Board in 1967. Its purpose, the building of a Christian world-view by remaking the Christian mind, apologetics, and education, was virtually congruent with Henry's activities. Thereafter, he served as its President from 1971 to 1974, and as a Director from 1976 to 1979 and again from 1981 to 1985. Henry was elected President of The Evangelical Theological Society in 1969, a group he named by motion at its initial meeting in 1949. It is an organization of biblical scholars, educators, and pastors who desire to serve Jesus and His church by advancing evangelical scholarship.<sup>115</sup> Henry was a long standing member of The American Theological Society, a group of scholars engaged in the examination of religious thought and its impact on faith and culture. On the basis of his work in these scholarly groups, his professional work, and his writings, Henry was named the "leading theologian of the nation's evangelical flank" by *Time Magazine* in 1977. In 1979, The American Theological Society elected him President.

In the early 1970s, Stan Mooneyham of World Vision International<sup>116</sup>, a Christian

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<sup>114</sup> Henry, *Confessions*, 326. Purdy, *Handbook of Evangelical Theologians*, 261.

<sup>115</sup> Henry, *Confessions*, 123. The doctrinal statement of ETS is (a) The Bible alone, and the Bible in its entirety is the Word of God written, and therefore inerrant in its autographs, and (b) God is a Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, each an uncreated person, one in essence, equal in power and glory.

<sup>116</sup> Bob Pierce, a Youth for Christ evangelist, returned from China in 1949 and wrote this prayer in his Bible, "Let my heart be broken by the things that break the heart of God." In 1950, World Vision was incorporated. See Tim Stafford, "The Colossus for Care," *Christianity Today*, March 2005, 50-56.

relief and development organization, offered Henry employment as their Lecturer-at-Large. Mooneyhan had been Henry's deputy for *Berlin/66*. World Vision offered Henry the opportunity to teach for three months annually outside the United States at events selected by Henry. If the world was John Wesley's parish, then World Vision wanted the world to be Carl Henry's classroom. The balance of the year could be spent teaching in the United States at events chosen by Henry, as long as he had sufficient time to write. Thus, Henry was free to allocate time to suit his needs, free to teach when and where he wanted, and free from the burden of raising funds. Henry's mission was to spread the evangelical faith around the world. In 1974, Henry joined World Vision and undertook the first of many international lecture tours. He passionately believed the possibility existed for a convergence of theological learning, evangelism, and social justice.<sup>117</sup>

At *Christianity Today*, as Lindsell approached retirement, he notified Henry, "I have decided that the *Footnotes* column will end...my successor will not be caught with either the first or the second editor's overhang." His final essay appeared in September 1977. Henry's demeaning departure, the dropping of his column, and the deletion of his name from the masthead left a wound that never completely healed. In the late 1990s, he wrote, "I wish someone had told me that you would really welcome an occasional pat on the back...to offset that boot in the derrière by erstwhile friends who give way every now and then to a lust for prominence and power, and walk over anyone to get it. Don't let such misguided kangaroos embitter you."<sup>118</sup> Despite being able to defend himself, Henry was a gentle man and never responded to personal impertinences.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> Henry, *Confessions*, 353.

<sup>118</sup> Carl F.H. Henry, "Learning to Avoid Subtle Temptations," in *Lessons in Leadership*, Randal Roberts, ed., (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 1999), 136-37.

<sup>119</sup> Fackre, *Handbook of Christian Theologians*, 588.



Henry described his career as an itinerant Lecturer for World Vision as one who

flew some 2 million miles by air, lecturing, preaching, and teaching, wearing a suit bought in Majorca, a beret from Spain, shoes resoled in Korea, carrying a Bible rebound in the Philippines, and meeting people everywhere who scarcely suspect what God can do for the individual whose mind and heart have been stretched by the good news of the Gospel.<sup>120</sup>

The people of the world benefited greatly from Henry's itinerant ministry of teaching and preaching. The evangelical faith was restored, people were renewed, and local pastors were refreshed—all for the benefit of God's Kingdom.

Given his flexible work schedule at World Vision, Henry accepted many visiting teaching positions. From the mid 1970s to the early 1990s, he held visiting professorships at a least the following schools: Bethel Theological Seminary, Calvin Theological Seminary, Christian Theological Seminary, Columbia Bible College, Denver Baptist Seminary, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, Hillsdale College, Hong Kong Baptist College, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, and Trinity Divinity School.

Between 1976 and 1983, Henry's theological magus opus, *God, Revelation, and Authority* consisting of six volumes and more than 3000 pages was completed and published. The subjects of Volumes I to IV are divine revelation and knowledge of God. These volumes bear the subtitle of *The God Who Speaks and Shows*, meaning the God who speaks and shows Himself. The theology of volumes I to IV is derived from fifteen theses. The subject matter of Volumes V and VI is the doctrine of God. These volumes bear the subtitle of *The God Who Stands and Stays*, meaning God has a real self-sufficient, living, objective, existence and He has been, is and will always be present to His creation. In 1999, this series was republished by Crossway.<sup>121</sup> The Publisher's notes

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<sup>120</sup> Fackre, *Handbook of Christian Theologians* 586-87.

<sup>121</sup> Carl F. H. Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, (1976-82; reprint, Wheaton, IL: Paternoster, 1999).

to that printing included these comments: Kenneth Briggs, New York Times, “The most important work of evangelical theology in modern times.”; David F. Wells, Dean, Gordon-Conwell, Charlotte, “These volumes are a landmark work, fully biblical, intellectually coherent, powerfully persuasive, and genuinely spiritual.”; Donald A. Carson, Professor, Trinity Evangelical Divinity, “A sure footed guide to a great many aspects of evangelical theology.”; and John Piper, Pastor, “*God, Revelation, and Authority* is a biblically faithful rock in the twentieth-century sea of theological experimentation.” In addition, Henry had sufficient time to complete six additional books and more than forty articles while working at World Vision.<sup>122</sup>

As Henry advanced into his seventies, he reduced his traveling, and in 1987, he retired from World Vision. Of all his employment relationships, World Vision was clearly the most enjoyable. Henry wrote, “World Vision added, in the fullest sense, an ‘at large’ dimension to my ministry, and to its credit maintained with integrity every commitment it had made to me. I shall be ever grateful.”<sup>123</sup>

### **Maturing Life: 1988 to 2003**

Henry and his wife relocated from Virginia to the pastoral setting of Hus Drive, Watertown, Wisconsin in 1992.<sup>124</sup> Helga and the Bender family generally regarded Watertown as their hometown. Henry remained an active author in retirement, writing eight books, editing one, and publishing more than forty articles after 1987.

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<sup>122</sup> Steven Spencer, *A Chronological Bibliography of Carl F.H. Henry*. [https://www.tiu.edu/files/hctu/Henry.chrono\\_biblio.combnd.doc](https://www.tiu.edu/files/hctu/Henry.chrono_biblio.combnd.doc) [accessed October 20, 2009].

<sup>123</sup> Henry, *Confessions*, 380.

<sup>124</sup> “Memorials”, *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 47, no.1 (March 2004): 179.

At age eighty-six, Henry probably made his last public appearances. He spoke at the inaugural gathering of the World Journalism Institute, an organization dedicated to encouraging and equipping Christian journalists, in August 1999 at Asheville, NC. He could barely travel due to chronic pain.<sup>125</sup> He delivered a classic address entitled *Journalistic Truth in a Postmodern Age*.<sup>126</sup>

Beginning in the 1990s, Henry's health deteriorated. Henry suffered from hip deformities and consequently chronic pain. Additionally, he had lived with an irregular heart rhythm for many years. These two conditions eventually confined him to a wheelchair, and finally the Moravian nursing home in Watertown.<sup>127</sup> Carl Henry died December 7, 2003 at age 90, and was buried at the Oak Hill cemetery in a family plot belonging to Helga's family, the Benders, in Watertown.

A Memorial Service was celebrated at Trinity Divinity in April 2004.<sup>128</sup> Henry was remembered and eulogized by friends and former students. Duane Litfin, Dean of Wheaton, noted that Henry was a generous man blessed with a servant's heart, a man who gave wise counsel, but always with a sense of humor. Timothy George, Dean of Beeson Divinity School, spoke of Henry's kindness and humility, and marveled that he never heard him speak a bitter word, even with those whom he disagreed. He recalled that one of Henry's favorite expressions of encouragement was "Strike a blow for the faith!" John Woodbridge, whose father Charles was Henry's colleague at Fuller, recalled

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<sup>125</sup> Robert Case, "Carl Henry Remembered," *The WJI Times Observer*, January 2004, 3. <http://www.worldji.com/Newsletters/Jan04newsletter.pdf> [accessed October 18, 2009].

<sup>126</sup> Carl Henry, *Journalistic Truth in a Postmodern Age*, <http://www.worldji.com/henry.asp> [accessed October 18, 2009].

<sup>127</sup> Specialists at the Mayo Clinic told Henry in spring 1958 that there was a possibility of him spending his later years in a wheelchair. See *Confessions*, page 185. To avoid this, Henry was advised to seek a desk job with limited travel. The irregular heart beat is a deduction based upon the prescription drugs listed on page 407 of *Confessions*. Confinement to a wheelchair in the Moravian nursing home in Watertown is based on Timothy George's comments at the Memorial Service. See note 128 below.

<sup>128</sup> Memorial Service at [http://www.henrycenter.org/carl\\_henry.php](http://www.henrycenter.org/carl_henry.php) [accessed on October 20, 2009].

Henry as a great man of prayer because as a child he often went with his father to pray at the Henry's home. A former student, Sarah Sumner, described Henry as a tall lanky man with intense eyes, most often covered with thick, dark-rimmed glasses. He dressed simply and generally had a serious appearance. She remembered a day when she was depressed and dispirited. Henry noticed her condition and encouraged her to unburden her cares. She said a sweet aura quickly surrounded them, as he comforted her and explained his favorite Scripture, 2 Corinthians 2:14 NRSV, "But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads in every place the fragrance that comes from knowing him."<sup>129</sup>

The tombstone marking the graves of Carl and Helga Henry bears the inscription, "Friends of the King." The stonemason who cut that tombstone asked, "What King?"<sup>130</sup> The question demonstrates humanity's continuing need for servants like Carl Henry who knew the King of Kings, and made Him known throughout the world.

In this chapter, the focus has been the life of Carl Henry and his personal relationships, particularly with Harold John Ockenga and Billy Graham, rather than his professional work. For most people their life and work are nearly inseparable because work defines their identity. For Carl Henry, his personal values defined his purpose, and his purpose defined his work. Thus in the next chapter, Henry's multifaceted professional work will be discussed.

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<sup>129</sup> Ockenga quoted this verse to Henry during his year as acting Dean at Fuller. Henry had written Ockenga concerning a number of problems facing Fuller, noting that he was heavily burdened with administrative problems. Ockenga replied by telegram on March 30, 1948, "Claim II Corinthians 2:14."

<sup>130</sup> Helga Henry, *Cameroon*, 169.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE THOUGHTS OF CARL HENRY

As was readily apparent in Chapter Three, Carl Henry was a multi-talented individual, blessed by the Holy Spirit with a wide variety of gifts that he developed into a number of professional skills. Those skills were utilized in an ever-changing array of roles and contexts. But for every combination of role and context, there was a unifying life-purpose that he expressed on several occasions. Early in 1947, while considering employment at Fuller, Henry wrote Ockenga, “The Pasadena venture strikes me at the point of intensest interest—a faculty of able men with the ability, time, and means to devote themselves to the task of pacing the whole evangelical movement in furnishing an overall rationale.”<sup>1</sup> Later at Fuller in 1950, Henry concluded, “I was determined ... to help give formative intellectual direction to the evangelical cause.”<sup>2</sup> And then at *Christianity Today* in 1967, Henry in discussion with the Board noted that he like, “Luther, Calvin, and Zwingli and other leaders of the Protestant Reformation were university-trained scholars, who gave guidance to the evangelical movement.”<sup>3</sup> Thus, Henry understood his life-purpose as providing leadership that would shape and influence the evangelical movement.

Henry’s work and thoughts influenced the general evangelical movement that greatly contributed to the Fourth Great Awakening in America. Yet, it is difficult to evaluate Henry’s individual contribution. First, Henry’s contribution was made over a long period

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<sup>1</sup> Henry to Ockenga, April 24, 1947, Ockenga Collection. Letters quoted are from the Ockenga Collection housed at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, South Hamilton, MA, unless otherwise noted.

<sup>2</sup> Carl F.H. Henry, *Confession of a Theologian: An Autobiography* (Waco, TX: World Books, 1986), 126.

<sup>3</sup> Henry, *Confession*, 272.

of time, from 1945 to 2003 in a wide variety of roles and contexts. He never occupied a specific role for more than a dozen years and frequently changed contexts. Second, Henry was part of a dynamic movement where short-term issues frequently changed and long-term issues remained relatively constant, but addressing the long-term concerns was often obscured by the intensity of short-term concerns. Third, although Henry was part of the leadership cadre of the Fourth Awakening, he was a humble man, surrounded by two other leaders, Graham and Ockenga, with strong personalities and magnetism. And fourth, Henry's contributions were sometimes not in view because they were often indirect and intangible.

Further, it seems inappropriate to prioritize Henry's contributions by role or to compare them with others in similar roles. This would likely deconstruct his professional life, sacrificing an appreciation for the unity of his contribution. Nevertheless, in an attempt to analyze Henry's contribution, his professional life has been segmented according to five professional roles through which he made contributions to the evangelical movement. The sequence of presentation reflects the approximate chronological order Henry assumed a particular professional role.

Given the above understandings, Henry's professional life relative to his stated life-purpose can be evaluated. Thus, the purpose of this chapter is three-fold: (1) to devise a generalized system of professional roles that describes the diversity of Henry's professional life, (2) to analyze Henry's contribution to the evangelical movement in his various professional roles, and (3) to evaluate Henry's professional work relative to his stated life-purpose.

## Teacher and Educator

On Henry's eightieth birthday, friends organized a celebration. Kenneth Kantzer, a friend, dating from their post-graduate days in the early 1940s, recalled his thoughts on that joyful night. Kantzer said that Henry, like all truly gifted people, had to make difficult decisions because he faced a variety of career choices. Kantzer remembered that in college, Henry pulled rabbits from a hat and sawed a woman in half to finance his education. Even in later life, Henry was known to astonish children by making a coin disappear and then magically reappear in a strange new place. Henry might have chosen entertainment, yet Kantzer was thankful that Henry chose not to be an entertainer. Kantzer recalled that Henry demonstrated his persuasive skills when he awakened the Fundamentalists from their half-century of social isolation. Henry might have chosen politics, yet Kantzer was again thankful that Henry chose not to be a politician, leaving that career to his son. Kantzer noted that Henry had been a journalist before entering college and even after leaving college. Henry might have chosen journalism, yet Kantzer was thankful that Henry chose not to be a journalist. In Kantzer's view, Henry always understood his calling; and thus, he became a teacher. Writing, editing, lecturing, and preaching were, in Kantzer's opinion, just part of the continual perfecting of Henry's skills as a teacher. Henry taught that the only world-life view that could ultimately satisfy the human mind and heart was biblical theism expressed as evangelical Christianity. Kantzer concluded, "Carl will be remembered as one who taught the human race against the fraying ends of irrationalism and superstition."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Kenneth S. Kantzer, "The Carl Henry that Might Have Been," *Christianity Today*, April 5, 1993, 15.

Henry's teaching career began during his student days at Wheaton College, as a typing instructor and later as an instructor in journalism. After graduation from Northern Baptist with a ThD, he was hired as Assistant Professor of Theology, and later became Professor of Systematic Theology and Philosophy of Religion, eventually being named Chair of the Philosophy and Religion Department. He taught at Northern Baptist from 1942 until 1947. He then joined the founding faculty at Fuller Seminary in 1947 as Professor of Theology and Christian Philosophy, and remained there until 1955 when he became editor of *Christianity Today*. Following his departure from the magazine, Henry returned to teaching at Eastern Baptist in 1969 as Visiting Professor of Theology. While at Eastern Baptist, Henry alternated semesters at Trinity Evangelical Divinity in 1970.<sup>5</sup> This continued until 1974, when Henry resigned from Eastern Baptist due to the faculty's ambiguous stance on biblical errors and their understanding of the term *evangelical*.

In 1974, Henry joined World Vision as Lecturer-at-Large and was freed to teach at any campus in the world that invited him. Between 1974 and 1987, Henry held the title of Visiting Professor or Distinguished Visiting Professor at approximately fifteen universities on five continents. He spent at least three months each year teaching and lecturing on a wide variety of subjects. He continued to teach until he was eighty. Thus, Henry teaching tenure encompassed forty years and spanned six decades.

Henry believed a teacher who was not intellectually demanding was living professionally on borrowed time. Thus, his teaching target was the top ten percent of the class which assured him average popularity among the students at best. To assume a lower standard suggested pandering. Henry's standard opposed Kant's principle which

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<sup>5</sup> R.A. Purdy, "Carl F. H. Henry," in *Handbook of Evangelical Theologians*, ed. W. A. Elwell, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1993), 261.



stated that teachers should aim at the middle third of the class, since the top third would learn well no matter what was taught and the bottom third would never learn no matter how much teacher's time was invested. When his friend Kantzer gently chided Henry that all students paid tuition, Henry responded that his teaching strategy was not due to elitism, but was a consequence of kingdom building, for from the top ten percent would come the future leaders who will guide the Church and society.<sup>6</sup>

According to the Christian world-life view, there is a definite relationship between moral integrity and intellectual competence. Therefore, grave moral flaws will invariably damage the competence of a teacher. Henry concluded that a teacher who forsakes this logical consistency can no longer teach because the role of mentor has been abdicated.<sup>7</sup> He believed that Matthew 7:17 applied, "A good tree produces good fruit, and a bad tree produces bad fruit." Effective teaching involves a living example. Teaching conveys moral values because truth can not be separated from moral values, and values are taught by word and deed. Henry wrote, "To teach a student without teaching values is worse than useless, it is dangerous....No conviction is so deadly as the one which equates knowledge with virtue."<sup>8</sup>

Henry presumed that all teachers employed at the same school should share essentially the same world-life view, and that the arts, sciences, and religion should be taught assuming a consistent world-life view. Without this constraint, there is a possibility that a student with several courses in a given semester could be bombarded with differing world-life views, each at great variance with the other. More disturbing

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<sup>6</sup> K.S. Kantzer, "Carl Ferdinand Howard Henry: An Appreciation," in *God & Culture: Essays in Honor of Carl F.H. Henry*, eds. D.A. Carlson and John D. Woolbridge (Grand Rapids MI: Paternoster, 1993), 377.

<sup>7</sup> Carl F. H. Henry, "The Christian Pursuit of Higher Education," *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 1, no.3 (Fall 1997): 12-13.

<sup>8</sup> Carl F. H. Henry, "Why a Christian University?" *Christianity Today*, October 10, 1960, 24.

was the apparent predilection of some schools to avoid hiring Christian teachers who can competently present the Judeo-Christian world-life view.<sup>9</sup>

Since reason is an essential part of the Christian faith, integration of life's spiritual and intellectual experiences is required.<sup>10</sup> Faith presupposes a rational relationship exists between Creator, humans, and the universe, since humans are intended not only to love God, but to know Him, or as Psalm 46:10 states, "Be still, and know that I am God." Because of these considerations, education was initially the responsibility of the Church and family. Following separation of Church and State, and the consequent privatization of religion, the Church and family relinquished their respective educational responsibilities to the State. Henry noted that public education cultivates atheistic humanism that relativizes absolute truths and nurtures distrust of religion. In place of absolute truths, public education elevates relative shared values, for instance harmony. Thus, public education is a subculture where the soul is replaced by the self, truth is replaced by shared values, and authority is replaced by autonomy.<sup>11</sup>

Perhaps a more distressing consequence of public education is that it represents little more than a transfer of facts. Graduates question the value of a university education that costs twenty to fifty thousand dollars annually and consists mostly of time dated facts that must be periodically updated during their professional lifetime, but leaves them without the ability to think, or more importantly to think morally.<sup>12</sup> This consideration alone suggested that it was appropriate for the church to resume an educational role. Henry

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<sup>9</sup> Carl F. H. Henry, *The Uneasy Conscience of the Modern Fundamentalist* (1947; reprint, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003), 69.

<sup>10</sup> Carl F. H. Henry, "Christian Education and the World of Culture," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 32, no. 4 (October 1958): 307.

<sup>11</sup> Carl F. H. Henry, *Twilight of a Great Civilization: The Drift toward Neo-Paganism* (Westchester, IL: Crossway, 1988), 87-89.

<sup>12</sup> Henry, *Twilight*, 89.

noted that the church should “develop competent literature in every field of study, on every level from grade school to university, which adequately presents each subject with its implications from the Christian as well as the non-Christian points of view.” Henry noted even that might not be sufficient. “The church and the publishing house are not fully adequate to fulfill the complete educational task; the importance of the evangelical school must be reaffirmed.”<sup>13</sup>

In his student days, Kantzer said Henry dreamed of developing a great Christian university based upon the sixteenth-century model of Wittenberg or Geneva. He hoped it would attract the best young students, so they could be sent out to convert the hearts and minds of the people to the evangelical faith. Kantzer coined the term “Utopia U” for Henry’s dream.<sup>14</sup> The dream returned in 1960, when Henry wrote, “We think *the providential moment* is here. The tide of American thought and life makes imperative a Christian university devoted in depth to the biblical revelation of God, of man, and of the world.” The mission of this national Christian university was to aggressively challenge the pagan and secular theories of reality; to supply a steady stream of spiritual leadership to all professions and vocations, including diplomacy, business, and communications. Henry described the principles of the university, as evangelistic in relevance, evangelical in doctrine, committed to high academic standards and moral purity. These four points would be the cornerstones of the university’s foundation.<sup>15</sup>

Students admitted to the university would demonstrate high academic achievements and sound character. Good character would be an insufficient substitution for deficient

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<sup>13</sup> Henry, *Uneasy Conscience*, 68-69.

<sup>14</sup> Kantzer, “Henry that Might Have Been,” 15.

<sup>15</sup> Carl F.H. Henry, “Evangelical Advance: Do We Need a Christian University?” *Christianity Today*, May 9, 1960, 3.

academic achievement. Certification of a student's Christian faith would not be required. Evidence of good moral character would be sufficient, since the university would introduce students to the beauty and practical desirability of the Christian faith.<sup>16</sup> However, the university would remain primarily an educational institution.

Henry thought university faculty must demonstrate a personal relationship with Christ. Moreover, Jesus Christ should be perceived as the center of revealed history and a historical figure of first importance. The faculty would be freed from adherence to a denominational creed, but must accept the Bible as the revealed Word of God and the explicit theology of the Apostles' Creed, without interpreting either away to insignificance. The faculty's first task would be to subsume all academic disciplines within the Christian world-life view. This would facilitate students building a Christian world-life view and integrating their academic and life experiences. The faculty's second task would be to undertake research and writing. The consequence of these activities would be to publish worthy textbooks that could penetrate the collegiate market. To satisfy the mission of the university, accomplish the several faculty tasks, and serve the student body, the faculty must be first rate teachers and scholars, highly regarded and respected in their academic communities and disciplines.<sup>17</sup>

Like Wittenberg and Geneva, the national Christian university, in Henry's opinion, should be located near a large city. Discussions favored the New York metropolitan area because of its strategic significance, financial wealth, and success of the 1957 Graham Crusade. Some supporters argued for the greater New York area, and implored Graham to unite the evangelical leaders who shared this vision. Graham clearly supported the

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<sup>16</sup> Henry, "Why a Christian University?" 25.

<sup>17</sup> Henry, "Do We Need a Christian University?" 3.

concept and encouraged appropriate discussion and planning. But he refused to be entangled with the details or permit the university to use his name.<sup>18</sup>

Prospects for the university faltered in the 1960s and ended in 1970 due to unresolved denominational concerns. Some wanted to build a Presbyterian seminary, others wanted to construct a Bible college, and still others wanted to strengthen Wheaton. Some supported Graham for the presidency of the university because of his access to resources, but others opposed this because the burden might curtail his evangelistic ministry.<sup>19</sup>

The loss of the Christian university caused a scar that healed poorly in Henry's mind. Twenty-five years later, he noted that the forfeited opportunity was never fully compensated by the counter moves at leading evangelical seminaries and colleges. Henry had in mind the strengthening of Wheaton College through the establishment of the Graham Center, the parallel development at Trinity Evangelical Divinity through the establishment of the Henry Center, the merger and strengthening of Gordon-Conwell, and the resulting outpouring of educational literature from all three sources.<sup>20</sup> In addition, the Institute for Advanced Christian Studies, an organization to which Henry was bound for more than a quarter century as founder, director, and president, assumed a portion of agenda intended for the Christian university. The Institute sponsored an important series of collegiate textbooks on Christianity and various intellectual subjects. Of this endeavor, Henry commented, "Tens of thousands of university students have made evangelical commitments despite the counterthrust of radical secular humanism. From these young intellectuals will come a literate clergy and qualified academics to help

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<sup>18</sup> Henry, "Do We Need a Christian University?" 5. Conversationally, the school was often called "Crusade University."

<sup>19</sup> Carl F.H. Henry, "American Evangelicals in a Turning Time," *Christian Century*, Nov 5, 1980, 1060.

<sup>20</sup> Henry, *Twilight*, 169-70.

realign liberal-arts learning in a quest for the whole truth.”<sup>21</sup>

As a teacher, Henry influenced the evangelical movement by theologically equipping several generations of American clergy, who then entered churches to sustain and spread the evangelical faith. Because he traveled extensively, his teaching also shaped the world-wide evangelical movement. Henry was a perceptive educator who encouraged the Christian community to challenge the assumptions of the public educational system. This motivated the Church to revise her role in education.

### **Ethicist and Philosopher**

As an undergraduate, Henry began his philosophy studies at Wheaton under Gordon Clark. Following completion of his graduate theological and divinity studies at Wheaton and Northern Baptist, he returned to philosophy and entered the PhD program at Boston University. During his doctoral studies, Henry was influenced by Harry Jellema at Indiana and Edgar Brightman at Boston. Between 1940 and 1947, teaching ethics at Wheaton and philosophy of religion at Northern Baptist represented the major expression of Henry’s philosophical interests.

Faith and theology honed Henry’s philosophical interests, and he soon discovered that ethics was located at the intersection of biblical theology and philosophy. Given this intersection, Henry was naturally attracted to ethics. Ethics defines behavioral standards that assist humans in making moral choices, accomplishing good in the world, and avoiding evil. For Henry the key issue was the ultimate source of ethical wisdom and knowledge. Thus, he wrote that this matter “rests in its entirety on the assumption that

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<sup>21</sup> Henry, “Evangelicals in a Turning Time,” 1062.

the one sovereign and righteous God who created man approves and requires a specific moral standard and behavior.” Both Testaments share this recognition of a divinely-commanded ethic. Ethics that substitute a human source, such as reason, experience, or tradition, for this divine source are not Christian Ethics, but philosophical Ethics. With regard to philosophical Ethics, Henry wrote, “Jesus is the example of uncompromised moral obedience; he stands head and shoulders above moral philosophers both in virtue of his teaching and of his sinless life.”<sup>22</sup>

Christian Ethics has two distinct perspectives—one which is oriented toward the individual and one which is oriented toward society. Personal Ethics defines interpersonal relationships; while Social Ethics defines society’s relationship with the individual. The sustaining force for an individual to live a moral is regeneration in Christ, and the sustaining force for a society to be moral is Christian justice that is freely available to all.<sup>23</sup> Christian Ethics successfully address sin and evil by assuming God’s intelligent and purposeful revelation in Christ.

In 1947, a small book based on a series of lectures presented by Henry at Gordon College concerning Christian ethics was published.<sup>24</sup> The book emphasized the following points. By 1930, humanitarian efforts by Fundamentalists had evaporated. Their churches largely renounced most programs dedicated toward moderating social ills, such as racial hatred, alcohol use, and exploitation of labor.<sup>25</sup> The disdain for the world was a consequence of the Fundamentalist’s premillennial eschatology which held no hope of establishing God’s Kingdom until the return of Christ. Thus, Fundamentalism

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<sup>22</sup> Carl F.H. Henry, *Baker’s Dictionary of Christian Ethics* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1973), s.v. “NT Ethics.”

<sup>23</sup> Henry, *Baker’s Dictionary of Christian Ethics*, s.v. “NT Ethics.”

<sup>24</sup> Henry, *Uneasy Conscience*.

<sup>25</sup> Henry, *Uneasy Conscience*, 3.

divorced the “here” from the “hereafter,” and, ignoring the “here,” concentrated their hope mostly on the “hereafter.”<sup>26</sup> Henry noted that a continuation of that flawed theology produced the uneasy conscience of the modern Fundamentalist. His remedy for their spiritual malaise was “preaching the Gospel... [so] divine redemption can be recognized as the best solution of our problems, individual and social.”<sup>27</sup>

No serious historical or theological review of the twentieth century seems to ignore the impact of Henry’s diminutive book. Patterson writes, “Evangelicals... owe an incalculable debt of gratitude to Carl Henry. His influence in... personal and social ethics... and socio-political involvement is unparalleled among evangelicals.”<sup>28</sup> In a chapter entitled *Redefining the Fundamentalist Mission*, Marsden devotes several pages to Henry’s thesis, writing Henry “was convinced that spiritual revival was humanity’s only real answer; yet he saw revival... as the first step in the reversal of major cultural trends.”<sup>29</sup> Rosell begins a chapter entitled *Reclaiming the Culture* with Henry’s book because it initiated a process where the church might regain an opportunity to participate in reforming society.<sup>30</sup> Dorrien, in a chapter entitled *Fundamentalism Reformed*, notes that Henry’s book suggested that “a more authentically Christian fundamentalism would reclaim the social mission of the gospel, discard elements that cut the nerve of world compassion, and rethink the importance of eschatological hope in Christian faith.”<sup>31</sup>

Twenty-five years after publication in 1972, Moberg wrote, Henry exposed “the uneasy conscience of modern fundamentalism” and called for a “new reformation which

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<sup>26</sup> Henry, *Uneasy Conscience*, 29-40.

<sup>27</sup> Henry, *Uneasy Conscience*, 88-89.

<sup>28</sup> Bob E. Patterson, *Carl F.H. Henry* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1983), 169.

<sup>29</sup> George M. Marsden, *Reforming Fundamentalism: Fuller Seminary and the New Evangelism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995), 75-82.

<sup>30</sup> Garth M. Rosell, *The Surprising Work of God: Harold John Ockenga, Billy Graham, and the Rebirth of Evangelicalism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 162-67, 185.

<sup>31</sup> Gary Dorrien, *The Remaking of Evangelical Theology* (Louisville, KY: Westminster, 1998), 53.



would make clear the implications of personal regeneration for social as well as individual problems. Since then there has been an ever-increasing flow of articles, sermons, books, and resolutions dealing with social issues from evangelical perspectives.” One pastor’s comment was typical of the emerging understanding of Henry’s thesis, “It takes the horizontal and the vertical to make the cross...at the same time an evangelicalism that preaches vertical redemption of a life and does not produce horizontal social action is an irrelevant antique.” And in parallel fashion, Leighton Ford noted, “A scheme to reconstruct society which ignores the redemption of the individual is unthinkable; but a doctrine to save sinning men with no aim to transform them into crusaders against social sin is equally unthinkable.”<sup>32</sup>

In 1994, forty-five years after publication, Noll called Henry “the most visible figure in reawakening a concern for social and political thought, who not only roused the troops with his *Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism*...but urged evangelicals to a more reflective engagement with the modern world.”<sup>33</sup>

Yet the definitive word for this book must be given by Henry. In 1988, he wrote,

Looking back, two things sometime surprise me about *Uneasy Conscience*: how little I said, and how boldly I said it. Sometimes I’m surprised by how well I said some things that needed urgently to be said....*Uneasy Conscience* was not an angry diatribe against fundamentalism. It voiced the failure of American Christianity to relate biblical verities to crucial contemporary concerns....What I protested was the illogicality of isolating personal ethics from social concerns....I never considered *Uneasy Conscience* to be a divinely dictated blueprint for evangelical utopia. But I remain troubled that even at a distance of forty years and more some of its challenges remain unheeded.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> David O. Moberg, *The Great Reversal: Evangelism versus Social Concern* (New York: Lippincott, 1972), 160-63.

<sup>33</sup> Mark A. Noll, *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1994), 221.

<sup>34</sup> Henry, *Twilight*, 163-68.

Henry's second book on ethics was published in 1957.<sup>35</sup> It was directed toward a different class of readers, teachers and students of Personal Ethics. This impressive textbook was based on two propositions. First, Henry held that philosophical Ethics was impotent because of its denial of God. Second, Christian Ethics was impoverished because it did not sufficiently address the problems of living in a secular society.<sup>36</sup>

Henry noted that the search for morality and truth are intrinsic concerns for the human spirit because the *Imago Dei* is imprinted by God the Creator. Thus, humans possess a capacity to discern the will of God and all that God requires of them.<sup>37</sup> The Christian doctrine of human depravity does not mean that humans are as wicked as they can be. Nor does it mean that fallen humans have no moral insight. The *Imago Dei* was broken, though not shattered.<sup>38</sup> The moral *Imago Dei* is spiritual and rational. The assertion that fallen humans possess no knowledge of God or His will destroys the moral responsibility that Scripture ascribes to humans.<sup>39</sup> In John 15:22 NKJ Jesus said, "If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin." Since Christian Ethics is the ethic of a revealed religion, it can not be divorced from its scriptural foundation. The divine content imprinted at creation on the *Imago Dei* can never be wholly obscured by sin. Thus, Christian Ethics builds upon the *Imago Dei* as intended by God; while philosophical Ethics remains impotent because it ignores sin and the necessity for sinful humans to confront their holy God.

Henry wrote, "Morality is bankrupt and cannot meet the claims of life unless it draws upon the resources of religion... The true authority of morals comes from the religion

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<sup>35</sup> Carl F. H. Henry, *Christian Personal Ethics* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1957).

<sup>36</sup> Henry, *Christian Personal Ethics*, 16.

<sup>37</sup> Henry, *Christian Personal Ethics*, 149-50.

<sup>38</sup> Henry, *Christian Personal Ethics*, 184-87.

<sup>39</sup> Henry, *Christian Personal Ethics*, 188-89.

which reveals the nature and purpose of God.”<sup>40</sup> It is God who requires a moral life, and not a moral life that requires God. The belief that it is desirable or even possible to discard religion and still retain pure morality is mistaken, for without religion there is no higher moral authority to which to appeal. That God and morality are related is evident in the order of the Decalogue. The duties of humans to God, Commandments One to Four, precede the duties of humans to other humans, Commandments Five to Ten. The inseparability of piety and morality is evident from this summary of the Commandments. He who does not love his fellowman is deficient in his love for God; and he who does not love God is deficient in his love for his fellowman.<sup>41</sup> Human morality is for the sake of God and cannot be separated from God.<sup>42</sup> The ideas of good and God are inseparable.

Christianity regards the universe as having a moral standard because it was created by an absolutely moral being. Yet, Christian morality cannot be premised upon obligation, or it degenerates into an imposition and ultimately becomes impoverished. In Romans 12:2 NIV Paul describes God’s will as “good, acceptable, and perfect.” Since humans have the capacity to discern God’s will, they can be expected to act for their personal good or the greater good. However, moral behavior should not be based just on goodness when there is a better motivator, namely *agape* love, love of God and neighbor.

But as goodness can be diminished by obligation, *agape* love can be depleted by limitation. Some mistakenly believe that Christian love applies only to the household of faith. This assumes that Christian acceptance is the consequence of regeneration. The evidence of the New Testament indicates that Jesus accepted all people on the basis of the Fatherhood of God which is a consequence of creation. Second, the doctrine of

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<sup>40</sup> Henry, *Christian Personal Ethics*, 190.

<sup>41</sup> Henry, *Christian Personal Ethics*, 199.

<sup>42</sup> Henry, *Christian Personal Ethics*, 198.

election was invoked to limit Christian love. *Agape* love was extended to the elect, but not necessarily to the reprobate. This position is flawed because it assumes that the elect can infallibly discern the identity of the elect and the reprobate.<sup>43</sup> The premise on which Christian love operates is abundance; thus, no limitation is present. The witness of Scripture is convincing on the universal applicability of *agape* love. In Matthew 5:43 NRSV Jesus declared, “You have heard it said to love your neighbor and hate your enemy. But I say to you. Love your enemy and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends the rain to fall on the righteous and the unrighteous....For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have?” The impoverishment of Christian ethics in modern life is the consequence of a flawed theology that reduces morality to the obligatory form of “I ought to do this.” But Christians can raise above that form of impoverishment, since Philippians 2:13 NRSV states, “for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.” Thus, they can receive enabling *agape* love from God that permits them to declare, “I want to do this.”

Henry concluded that personal morality is a consequence of sanctification. Living a moral life is empowered by the Holy Spirit. Sanctification is instantaneous and progressive, requiring the cooperation of the believer. Sanctification represents a change so that sinful acts are less frequent and righteous acts are more frequent. Henry believes the Bible does not support complete sanctification in this life based in part on Philippians 3:12 RSV, “Not as though I have already attained, either were already perfect.” Progressive sanctification is possible, but not freedom from the possibility of all sin.<sup>44</sup> As

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<sup>43</sup> Henry, *Christian Personal Ethics*, 223-24.

<sup>44</sup> Henry, *Christian Personal Ethics*, 463-67.

sanctification progresses, the individual lives an increasingly moral life.

In parallel fashion to his book on Personal Ethics, a smaller text on Social Ethics based on a lecture series presented at Fuller was published in 1963.<sup>45</sup> The title reflected Henry's limited treatment of the subject, due to his work schedule at the magazine. The book's underlying premise is that twentieth-century society expected increasing social reform by way of education, legislation, and public pressure. But these failed to produce the desired changes. Not surprising, Henry suggested that effective social reform begins with appropriate moral and scriptural standards. He noted, "An authentic Christian social ethic begins with the surety of the self-revealing God as creator, redeemer, and judge of all... and the first order of business in presenting an evangelical social ethic is to expose the false assumptions that control the contemporary alternatives."<sup>46</sup> With respect to the Church's participation, Henry sounded a cautionary note, "I cannot escape the conviction that, immense as the Christian stake in legislation, education, and culture may be, the Church is grievously wrong to plunge into these concerns at the expense of neglecting its prior responsibilities toward the family and vocational calling."<sup>47</sup>

While the Church can rely on regenerated individuals to transform society, it cannot ignore its educational and legislative roles to preserve the social order. Preserving the good in society is worth doing. In the legislative process, the Church can not force its moral code on an unresponsive public. To do so is to abuse its influence and nurture resentment against the Church. Nor can the Church seek a favored position to advance its own agenda. The Church must promote the welfare of society through its membership.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Carl F.H. Henry, *Aspects of Social Ethics* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964).

<sup>46</sup> Carl F.H. Henry, *A Plea For Evangelical Demonstration* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1971), 45-48.

<sup>47</sup> Henry, *Aspects of Social Ethics*, 9-10.

<sup>48</sup> Henry, *Aspects of Social Ethics*, 72-79.

With respect to the biblical standards of Social Ethics, it has been suggested that Henry assumed three values—justice, stewardship, and service.<sup>49</sup> Justice is first in significance because social reform is impossible without justice. Thus, the Church must support the cause of justice. The biblical view of civil government is that it is a desirable means to preserve justice in a nation of sinful humans. It is God’s alternative to disorder, anarchy, and tyranny.<sup>50</sup> Paul expressed this in Romans 13:1-4 NRSV, “Let every person be subject to the governing authorities; for there is no authority except from God, and those authorities that exist have been instituted by God...for it is God’s servant for your good.” The Church supports the State to the extent that just laws are applied appropriately—no exemptions from the law and full and equal protection for all under the law.<sup>51</sup> The critical need for justice in social reform was a theme Henry consistently proclaimed for fifty years. In 1965, Henry wrote, “Social justice is a need of the individual whose dignity as a person is at stake, and of society and culture which would soon collapse without it.”<sup>52</sup> At the World Congress on Evangelism in 1966, he reminded the delegates, “The God of the Bible is the God of justice and justification. The Christian evangelist...knows that justice is due all because a just God created mankind in his holy image, and he knows that all need justification because the holy God sees us as rebellious sinners.” In 1971 Henry wrote, the Bible “refuses to substitute private religion for social responsibility,” for it commands us to walk uprightly and to seek justice.<sup>53</sup> In the early 80s, Henry noted, “No Christian incisively proclaims the gospel unless he is as explicit

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<sup>49</sup> David I. Weeks, “Carl Henry’s Moral Arguments for Evangelical Political Activism,” *Journal of Church and State* 40, no.1 (January 1998): 91-93. <http://www.accessmylibrary.com/article/print/1G1-20491644> [accessed on 6/16/10].

<sup>50</sup> Carl F.H. Henry, “Christian Personal and Social Ethics in Relation to Racism, Poverty, War and Other Problems,” in *Let The Earth Hear His Voice*, ed. J. Douglas, (Minneapolis, MN: Worldwide, 1975), 1176.

<sup>51</sup> Henry, *Aspects of Social Ethics*, 88-93.

<sup>52</sup> Carl F. H. Henry, “Evangelicals in the Social Struggle,” *Christianity Today*, October 8, 1965, 6.

<sup>53</sup> Henry, *A Plea*, Preface, 107.

and urgent about the justice God demands as he is about the justification God offers.”<sup>54</sup>

Since the State is the primary agent of justice, Henry provided guidelines to facilitate the Church’s relationship with the State. First, the Church is obliged to teach and demonstrate proper performance of its political duty from a biblical perspective. Second, the Church must publicize its view of the State. Silence can lead to suspicion. Third, the Church must prudently exercise its role as moral sentry, if the State transgresses its limits. Fourth, the Church must proclaim that God is the grantor of human rights, not the State. And fifth, God desires to exercise his will and achieve his purpose for humanity through civil governments.<sup>55</sup> These guidelines recognize the legitimate authority of government to restrain evil, and that such authority is invested by God.

The second biblical value supporting social reform is stewardship. Genesis 1:28 NRSV notes, “God blessed them, and said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over...every living thing.’” Humans were created in God’s image and given dominion, meaning stewardship, over God’s creation, in order to preserve it for God’s purpose.<sup>56</sup> Thus, the task of God’s people after the Fall is to reclaim creation for God through renewed stewardship. Henry defines stewardship as “the practice of systematic and proportionate giving of time, abilities, and material possessions based upon the conviction that these are a trust from God to be used in his service for the benefit of all mankind.”<sup>57</sup> Practical stewardship means “supporting the needs of the aged, the blind, lame and dying, and supplying food for the starving. Believers should set an example by providing for...those of the fellowship of faith...and

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<sup>54</sup> Carl F.H. Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority* (Waco, TX: Word, 1979), 3:72.

<sup>55</sup> Henry, *Aspects of Social Ethics*, 82-92.

<sup>56</sup> Henry, *Twilight*, 117.

<sup>57</sup> Weeks, “Henry’s Moral Arguments”, 94.

for the well-being of the community....God has an eye for the poor and a divine blessing is promised those who are charitable toward them.”<sup>58</sup>

Service, the third biblical value supporting social reform, is a consequence of stewardship. Service means the gift of time through one’s presence or participation in aiding neighbors or assisting the cause of justice. Christians are commanded to promote justice in actionable terms. Henry wrote, “Talk is no more a substitute for action than faith is a substitute for works. If words are all we have, they choke us with judgment.”<sup>59</sup> A distinctive feature of New Testament ethics is its call to every believer to serve God and neighbor. The redeemed person stands in a social relationship with God and society. Henry claimed, “Christians as individuals do indeed have the duty, to the limit of their competence and ability, of engaging directly in the determination of public issues as they seek in good conscience to particularize the principles of social righteousness in terms of various political options.”<sup>60</sup> The problem is the conflict between the Christian ideal and modern culture. Modern culture has elevated a self-indulgent priority in every dimensions of life, so that many do not understand how to live a life of service.

In an interview with *Time*, William Sloan Coffin, pastor of Riverside Church, said, “If you find an Evangelical with a social conscience you’ve found one of God’s saints.”<sup>61</sup> Even critics, such as Lewis Smedes, theologian and writer, acknowledged that no one has done more to awaken the evangelical conscience on scores of ethical issues than Carl Henry.<sup>62</sup> Henry’s diminutive book of 1947 significantly shaped the course of

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<sup>58</sup> Henry, “Christian Personal and Social Ethics”, 1174-75.

<sup>59</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 4:547.

<sup>60</sup> Carl F.H.Henry, *Evangelicals at the Brink of Crisis* (Waco: Word, 1967), 71.

<sup>61</sup> *Time Magazine*, “Religion: Back to that Old Time Religion,” December 26, 1977. <http://www.time.com/time/printout/0,8816,919227,00.html> [accessed November 4, 2009].

<sup>62</sup> Weeks, “Henry’s Moral Arguments”, 95.



evangelicalism, and more importantly American Protestantism. Social responsibility and the engagement of culture were again regarded as the normative standard of the Christian faith because the God who justifies sinners is also the God of perfect justice.

### Journalist and Author

Near the end of Henry's life, he was invited to speak at the World Journalism Institute. He began his remarks with this thought,

My last formal address to journalists... now calls for revision. For I championed comprehensive objectivity in reporting, writing, and editing, over against subjective coverage. What I failed then fully to recognize is that all human thought necessarily involves presuppositions and that journalistic truth has some limitations... If so-called "journalistic truth" preoccupies us, we may not be in touch with truth at all. Truth is indivisible. For Christians, truth is what God thinks and wills and says.<sup>63</sup>

He reminded the audience of Matthew 12:36 NIV, "But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken. For it is by your words that you will be acquitted and by your words that you will be condemned."

After High School, Henry began a career in journalism on Long Island, NY. Henry sold newspaper subscriptions and did sports reporting for *The Islip Press*. Later, he proof read galleys. By age twenty, he became the youngest editor of a New York weekly—first the *Smithtown Star* and then the *Port Jefferson Times Echo*.<sup>64</sup> He was also a suburban correspondent for *The New York Times*, *New York Herald*, and *Chicago Daily Tribune*.<sup>65</sup>

At times, in his student days, he served as a reporter for the *Wheaton Daily Journal*,

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<sup>63</sup> Carl F.H. Henry, "Journalistic Truth in a Postmodern Age." <http://www.worldji.com/henry.asp> [accessed October 18, 2009].

<sup>64</sup> Beth Spring, "God's Journalist," *Christian Life*, April, 1981, 21 and 53.

<sup>65</sup> Gabriel Fackre, "Carl F. H. Henry," in *A Handbook of Christian Theologians*, eds. Dean G. Peerman and Martin E. Marty (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1984), 583.

*Aurora Beacon*, *Elgin Courier-News*, and correspondent for the *Chicago Daily Tribune*.

Given his practical expertise in journalism, he was invited to teach journalism at Wheaton. But his journalistic career appeared to end abruptly in 1942 with the completion of his degrees in philosophy, theology, and divinity.

During his student period, 1929 to 1942, Henry's literary style was transformed. Henry wrote several weekly newspaper columns, one while living on Long Island and another while attending Wheaton. He authored eight small articles for various regional Christian journals and magazines. He had three academic theses and a graduation speech published. Of greater significance, Henry's first book, based on his experiences at a mission in a Chicago slum, was published.<sup>66</sup> During this period, the confluence of education, maturity, and calling pushed Henry beyond the literary style of a hard-driven journalist to the preeminent perimeter of reflective writing.

The result of this literary transformation became apparent in his teaching period, 1943 to 1955. During this period, Henry wrote more than one hundred articles for journals and magazines. In the early and mid 1940s, the articles were short and generally published in popular magazines of the day, such as *Christian Life and Times*. By the early 1950s, his articles were longer, more academic in content, and published in scholarly journals such as *Eternity*. In addition, he authored nearly one hundred book review columns, mostly in *United Evangelical Action* and *Christian Life and Times*. The crowning achievement of this period was the eight books he authored, and the jewel in his literary crown was *The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism* which firmly established him as a voice of national prominence in the new evangelical movement. *Remaking of the Modern Mind*

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<sup>66</sup> Carl F.H. Henry, *The Pacific Garden Mission: A Doorway to Heaven* (Grand Rapids, MN: Zondervan, 1942).

brought Henry limited recognition as a Christian philosopher, and *Fifty Years of Protestant Theology* helped popularize him as an evangelical theologian.

During his editor period, 1956 to 1968, there were observable changes in Henry's literary output, marked by an increase in articles for journals and magazines. He wrote almost two hundred articles, averaging fourteen per year. The increase in articles was explained by a decrease in the authorship of books during this period. Henry averaged less than one book every two years while he was an editor. Actually, he edited more books than he wrote during this period. A significant, but mildly controversial, book written during this period was *Evangelicals at the Brink of Crisis*. The book posed questions about the future of the evangelical movement, using the World Congress on Evangelism as its starting point. The book's premise was evangelicals faced a growing crisis of gradual extinction since evangelical leaders seemed unable to form a church-based movement that could attract the fragmented evangelicals. Henry concluded, "If the evangelical Christians do not join heart to heart...across their multitudinous fences...they may become...a wilderness cult in a secular society with no more public significance than the ancient Essenes in their Dead Sea Caves."<sup>67</sup>

Of greater popularity and significance was his work at *Christianity Today*. His editorial material covered a wide spectrum of topics—theological, cultural, social, political, and educational. His articles were often reprinted in journals, other magazines and translated into foreign languages. Henry's name was widely recognized in the United States and increasingly around the world as a leading spokesman for the evangelical movement, because his pen was reasoned, persuasive, and always civil.

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<sup>67</sup> Henry, *Brink of Crisis*, 110-11.

On the twenty-fifth anniversary of the magazine in 1981, Martin Marty affirmed this conclusion. He wrote, “*Christianity Today* has been the prime agent in demarcating, informing, and providing morale for the evangelical movement.” Four achievements stand out; the first being that the editors consistently saw that the movement was in urgent need of theological refurbishment. Second, they refreshed the blend of piety and moralism of evangelicalism’s prime. Many found the magazine’s reformulation reassuring. Third, and perhaps most refreshing, was the magazine’s constant concern that Christianity must engage culture. And fourth, thanks to founding editor Carl Henry’s uneasiness about evangelicalism’s social conscience, the magazine moved beyond personal virtue and vice into societal issues as well. Marty concluded,

I have rued the fact that today the committed are seldom civil, and the civil seldom committed....On these pages, at least there have been calls for civility and culture to match the passion and firmness of faith....But to the degree that *Christianity Today* has resolved to state its case with some respect for those who do not share its every detail, the magazine has brought a gift to go with its evangelical claims.<sup>68</sup>

His freelance period, 1969 to 1986, represents the period following Henry’s frustrating departure from the magazine until his retirement from World Vision. This was his most productive literary period, for he wrote fourteen books, edited seven, and published more than two hundred and forty journal articles. In addition to his editorial undertakings, he was generally a contributing writer.<sup>69</sup> From 1969 to 1977, Henry wrote *Footnotes*, a monthly column, for the magazine. During this period, a few older books were reprinted in a variety of foreign languages.<sup>70</sup> This reflected Henry’s growing worldwide reputation as a consequence of his travels with World Vision.

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<sup>68</sup> Martin Marty, “The Marks and Misses of a Magazine,” *Christianity Today*, July 17, 1981, 48-51, 58.

<sup>69</sup> For example, as editor of *Horizons of Science*, he wrote Chapter 5 “The Ambiguities of Scientific Breakthrough.” As editor of *Baker’s Dictionary of Christian Ethics*, he authored several definitions.

<sup>70</sup> The following texts were reprinted: *Faith at the Frontiers* and *New Strides in Faith* in Spanish, *Basic Christian Doctrines* in Korean, and *Toward a Recovery of Christian Belief* in Russian and Romanian.

*A Plea for Evangelical Demonstration* was favorably received as Henry returned to a familiar theme—the ineffective social witness of evangelicals. His plea is summarized:

Christian duty in the social order does not stop with warnings. The Christian prays daily and ought to work daily for God's will to be done on earth, as in heaven. As a citizen of two worlds he will engage wherever possible in the struggle for social righteousness to the full limit of personal ability and competence. Existing social structures that frustrate human freedom and public justice must be challenged.<sup>71</sup>

*Evangelicals in Search of Identity* created controversy, as Henry revealed the hidden, but growing, fractures within the evangelical movement caused by issues ranging from biblical authority to women's ordination. At a time when the evangelicalism was popular, his concern touched sensitive nerves within the movement. "Unless evangelicals repair their multiplying frictions over social and political engagements in an intelligently spiritual meeting of the mind and heart, the situation can only result in still further divisions that forfeit whatever impact might issue otherwise through strategic cooperation."<sup>72</sup> His remedy was a compassionate appeal, "The most promising steps may be not in a new national or regional convention, but in local fellowships where neighbors and townspeople affirm their oneness in Christ as those whose lives are scripturally controlled by the Spirit."<sup>73</sup> Woodbridge's review noted that Henry feared the evangelical roaring lion might become a docile pussycat. He credits Henry with shaking "us out of any complacency we may have developed" during our momentary prosperity.<sup>74</sup>

Between 1976 and 1982, *God, Revelation, and Authority* was published. This series is composed of two parts—volumes I to IV, subtitled *God who Speaks and Shows*, and volumes V and VI, subtitled *God who Stands and Stays*. Part One describes how

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<sup>71</sup> Henry, *A Plea*, 122.

<sup>72</sup> Carl F.H. Henry, *Evangelicals in Search of Identity* (Waco, TX: Word, 1976), 68.

<sup>73</sup> Henry, *Evangelicals in Search of Identity*, 75.

<sup>74</sup> John Woodbridge "Stunted Growth or Stunning Growth," *Eternity*, October, 1976, 64-66.

humanity can know God. Henry was adamant that God is known solely through revelation. Part Two describes the nature of the ever-present, eternal, one living God who chooses to reveal himself, and the benefits humanity obtains from his revelations.<sup>75</sup> This six volume set of theology was called “the most important work of evangelical theology in recent times” by the *New York Times*.<sup>76</sup> It capped Henry’s career as a theologian, and it also capped his literary career by becoming the matching bookend for his earlier masterpiece, *The Uneasy Conscience of the Modern Fundamentalism*.

The final period, 1986 to 1999, was retirement. Henry retired from World Vision at age seventy-four and subsequently moved from Virginia to Wisconsin. It was a productive literary time for him. He wrote eight books, edited one, and published forty-three journal articles. Two books from this period are significant. First, *Twilight of a Great Civilization* represented his assessment of the moral deterioration and intellectual disintegration of America. The primary problem was Christianity had been invaded by secular culture and become hopelessly infested with pagan characteristics. Henry’s remedy reflected his frustration, “We must choose to cast our lot either with a society that admits only private faiths, and add another idol to modernity’s expanding God-shelf, or we must hoist a banner to a higher Sovereign, the Lord of lords, and King of kings.”<sup>77</sup>

The second book of note is Henry’s autobiography, *Confessions of a Theologian*. The reviewers characterized the book as a valuable historical first-person narrative of the new evangelical period. Woolbridge noted Henry “wrote a remarkably engaging piece...He dazzles readers with detailed technicolor descriptions of incidents small and

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<sup>75</sup> This series will be examined in detail under the subsequent heading “**Theologian and Apologist.**”

<sup>76</sup> Spring, “God’s Journalist”, 53.

<sup>77</sup> Henry, *Twilight*, 181.

great as seen from the cockpit of the evangelical movement.”<sup>78</sup>

After reading Henry’s autobiography, Mouw discovered that an early article he wrote contributed to the Pew-Henry discord that resulted in Henry’s departure. In 1967, Mouw wrote an article for the magazine and Henry suggested a revision. Following some debate, Mouw grudgingly accepted the revision. In the ensuing years, Mouw’s view concerning the subject changed. In a recent article, Mouw wrote, “I have an account to settle with Carl Henry. It is too late to personally settle it with him—although I hope to do it in the hereafter. For now, though, I can set the record straight in the pages of this magazine... Henry was right and I was wrong.”<sup>79</sup>

Two chronological bibliographies of Henry’s works are available. One, the Bates File, is maintained by The Henry Center for Theological Understanding at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, and the other, the Spencer File, is maintained by Trinity College. The Bates File was based on Henry’s personal records. The Spencer File apparently was constructed from other records. Neither file is complete.<sup>80</sup>

Tables 1 and 2, which follow, display data derived from the merged Bates and Spencer Files. Henry’s literary life can be divided into several periods: the student period, 1929 to 1942; the teacher period, 1943 to 1955; the editor period, 1956 to 1968 at *Christianity Today*; 1969 to 1987, the period when he accepted free-lance style of employment through World Vision; and retirement, the period following 1987 when he retired from World Vision. Such a division provides an opportunity to analyze his literary production and genre versus concurrent employment.

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<sup>78</sup> John Woodbridge, “Carl F.H. Henry: Spokesperson for American Evangelicalism” in *God & Culture: Essays in Honor of Carl F.H. Henry*, eds. D.A. Carlson and John D. Woodbridge (Grand Rapids, MI: Paternoster, 1993), 390.

<sup>79</sup> Richard J. Mouw, “Carl Henry Was Right,” *Christianity Today*, January, 2010, 30-31.

<sup>80</sup> By merging the two files, accuracy was marginally improved.

**Table 1. Published Works by Period.**

	STUDENT 1934-42	TEACHER 1943-55	EDITOR 1956-68	FREELANCE 1969-86	RETIRED 1987-99	CAREER
Books	1	8	6	14	8	37
Editor	1	1	8	7	1	18
Articles	8	112	182	243	43	588

**Table 2. Annual Rates of Publication by Period.**

Books	.1 per year	.6 per year	.5 per year	.8 per year	.7 per year
Editor	.1	.1	.6	.4	.1
Articles	1.0	8.6	14.0	14.3	3.3

Sources: William H. Bates, "Published Works of Carl F. H. Henry" [http://www.henrycenter.org/carl\\_henry.php](http://www.henrycenter.org/carl_henry.php). [accessed October 21, 2009]; Stephen Spencer, "A Chronological Bibliography of Carl F.H.Henry" [http://www.tiu.edu/files/hctu/Henry.chrono\\_biblio.combnd.doc](http://www.tiu.edu/files/hctu/Henry.chrono_biblio.combnd.doc) [accessed October 20, 2009].

From other sources, the career number of books written was independently verified.

Woolbridge stated that Henry had written thirty-five books.<sup>81</sup> Subsequently, Henry wrote

*God of This Age or God of the Ages* in 1994 and *Has Democracy Had Its Day?* in 1996.

Thus, the total of thirty-seven in Table 1 is correct. The editing and articles totals are

understated due to known errors in the Bates and Spencer Data Files. Reasonable

estimates are twenty and seven hundred, respectively.<sup>82</sup> Tables 1 and 2 demonstrate that

the Freelance Period was Henry's most productive. He wrote fourteen books and two

hundred and forty-three articles, and his productivity rates were the highest. Henry's

unfortunate exit from the magazine afforded him the opportunity to increase his writing.

Henry was frustrated at the magazine because of insufficient time to undertake larger

<sup>81</sup> John Woolbridge, "Carl F.H.Henry" in *Ambassadors for Christ* (Chicago: Moody, 1994), 73-77.

<sup>82</sup> Purdy, "Carl F.H.Henry", 274. Purdy estimated the number of journal articles at seven hundred.



works. He did have short spans of time to edit books and write articles, but these apparently did not satiate his deeper literary desires.

Given Henry's prolific writings, the press hailed Henry as a leader of evangelicalism and affectionately acclaimed him, "the thinking man's Billy Graham."<sup>83</sup> But Henry's influence extended beyond intellectuals; his coherent, cogent, and compassionate style of writing influenced a large, loyal, and diverse world-wide following of evangelicals.

### **Pastor and Leader**

"I never aspired to leadership," Henry said. "Leadership is God's gift and God provides it. And when he does, it is in the areas that he gives, and he determines the seasons for which it is given." The issue, Henry noted, is not how to lead people but how to obey God. "What God asks is obedience, not prominence or even success."<sup>84</sup> "If you aspire to leadership, you will lose a lot of friends. Aspire to be Number Two. You will have the field to yourself. When the right time comes the Lord will call you up higher. And you will more likely be ready."<sup>85</sup>

Henry became a leader, and his leadership was exercised in diverse contexts and roles throughout his long professional life. While attending Northern Baptist, he served as a student pastor at Humboldt Park Baptist Church in Chicago in 1940. The parish, a member of the German Baptist association, was in a state of decline, both spiritually and numerically. The call to serve at Humboldt came without Henry's active candidacy and

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<sup>83</sup> Woodbridge, *Ambassadors for Christ*, 73.

<sup>84</sup> Russell Chandler, "Carl F.H. Henry: Towering Theologian," in *The Overcomers* (Old Tappan, NJ: Revell, 1978), 36.

<sup>85</sup> Carl F.H. Henry, "Learning to Avoid Subtle Temptations," in *Lessons in Leadership*, Randal Roberts ed., (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 1999), 136-37.

may have been the consequence of his father-in-law's reputation as a distinguished missionary in the German Baptist fellowship. The unexpectedness of his call was reflected in his first sermon which was based on Acts of the Apostles 10:21 NKJV, "I am he whom you seek. For what reason have you come?" Henry was ordained at Humboldt in 1941. Under his leadership, the congregation increased in size and enthusiasm.<sup>86</sup>

As Henry's homiletic skills matured, he was invited to join some young distinguished evangelists associated with Youth for Christ. He was soon preaching at Saturday night rallies to crowds of a thousand to fifteen hundred in large Midwestern cities, such as St. Louis, Detroit, Rockford, Grand Rapids, and Cleveland. During the summers, there were invitations to Inter-Varsity groups and Campus in the Woods.<sup>87</sup> These experiences strengthened his pulpit leadership. Thus, some of his sermons were independently selected and published typifying the best of the year.<sup>88</sup> He was at ease before crowds, whether it was twenty-five thousand at the annual Easter Sunrise service at the Rose Bowl, an event he led from 1948 to 1956, or twelve thousand students in Seoul, Korea at the 1980 World Evangelism Crusade. Henry was more than a preacher; he was an evangelist, tirelessly seeking occasions to speak an encouraging word for Christ. He knew that regeneration supernaturally changed lives and such was the premises of his ministry. In a letter to Graham, Henry wrote, "In an evangelistic and missionary thrust, I have but one uncompromisable zeal—that Christ be known in his total claim upon life."<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> Henry, *Confessions*, 103-04.

<sup>87</sup> Henry, *Confessions*, 105.

<sup>88</sup> For example, "Christ on the Margin of Life" [Lk. 4:34] in *Best Sermons: 1959-60*, ed. G.P. Butler, (New York: Crowell, 1959); "The Light that Shines Forever" [Jn. 1:5] in *Best Sermons: 1964*, ed. G.P. Butler, (New York: Van Nostrand, 1964); "Christ and His Embattled Legions" [Col. 1:18] in *Sermons to Men of Other Faiths*, ed. G. Anderson, (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1966); "God and His World" [Jn. 3:16] in *The Minister's Manual 1973*, (New York: Harper&Row, 1972); and "The Fight of the Day" [Rom. 13:11-14] in *Best Sermons 1*, ed. J.W. Cox, (San Francisco: Harper&Roe, 1988).

<sup>89</sup> Woodbridge, *Ambassadors for Christ*, 73-75.

Perhaps as a consequence of that thought, Graham approached Henry in 1964 concerning Graham's vision of a worldwide evangelism conference. The result of that discussion was later known as *World Congress on Evangelism: Berlin/66—One Race, One Gospel, One Task*, or more simply *Berlin/66*. Henry agreed to lead the event as Chairman and *Christianity Today* would be the sponsoring organization.

Henry established the biblical context of the Congress, "It recalls the Jerusalem Council of A.D. 50 which supported the extension of evangelism to the Gentile, as well as the Jewish world." He noted that the Congress assumed the primacy of evangelization by the Church expressed by the Reformation principle of *sola scriptura*. He then related these to the present context, "The congress marks an effort by many mass evangelists to restore evangelism to the local congregations... and thus put themselves out of business as a professional class."<sup>90</sup> Finally, Henry set forth the purpose of the Congress,

(1) to define biblical evangelism, (2) to show the modern world the relevance of Christ's mission, (3) to stress the urgency of evangelistic proclamation throughout the world in this generation, (4) to discover new methods of relating biblical evangelism to our times, (5) to study the obstacles to biblical evangelism and propose the means of overcoming them, (6) to consider the types of evangelistic endeavor currently employed in various lands, and (7) to summon the Church to recognize the priority of its evangelistic task.<sup>91</sup>

In a series of articles concerning the foundation of evangelism, it was noted that evangelism is a gift of the Spirit and therefore the authority for evangelism. Thus, no one could become an evangelist simply on the basis of an oratorical gift.<sup>92</sup> These articles represented Henry's attempt to prepare the participants, biblically and theologically, to accomplish the stated purpose of the Congress.

The twelve hundred Congress participants from more than a hundred nations reached

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<sup>90</sup> Carl F.H. Henry, "Good News for a World in Need," *Christianity Today*, October 14, 1966, 34.

<sup>91</sup> Henry, "Good News for a World in Need," 35.

<sup>92</sup> Johannes Schneider, "The Authority for Evangelism," *Christianity Today*, October 28, 1966, 4-7.

several conclusions. The Congress declared that mission and the Church are coterminous. "The Gospel and the Church... stand in an indissoluble relationship."<sup>93</sup> The Congress agreed that social action was a part of evangelism and should not be separated from it. There was no claim that social action constituted evangelism. The Congress opposed dialogues with non-Christian religions. Thus, it failed to some extent to accomplish the goal to overcome the obstacles to biblical evangelism. The Congress was unanimous that evangelism was a unifying project, and to accomplish the goal of evangelizing the world in this generation required the inclusion of the laity. The Congress did not squarely address cross-cultural evangelization in a pluralistic society. On balance, *Berlin/66* represented a significant step forward for contemporary mission theology.<sup>94</sup>

As a result, Henry thought that evangelicalism was strategically situated to succeed.

Evangelical Christianity has not only received new prominence through the World Congress on Evangelism, but it also has gained new prospective and promise for the near future. But this same turn of events has brought the evangelical movement to the brink of decision over three major concerns that impinge on its evangelistic task in the world.... While the driving concern of the [Congress'] statement is evangelistic, its theological, social, and ecumenical implications are far-reaching, and in each of these areas the evangelical movement is now strategically stationed at the crossroads in relation to nonevangelical forces in contemporary religious life.<sup>95</sup>

In retrospect, at least one source attributes the accomplishments of *Berlin/66* to Henry "because of his incomparable [leadership] role" at the Congress.<sup>96</sup>

In recognition of Henry's leadership success at *Berlin/66* and perhaps in honor of his recent election as President of the Evangelical Theological Society, he was invited to serve as Program Chairman of the Jerusalem Conference on Biblical Prophecy. The

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<sup>93</sup> Carl F.H. Henry and W. Stanley Mooneyhan, eds., *One Race, One Gospel, One Task: World Congress on Evangelism, Berlin, 1966* (Minneapolis, MN: World Wide, 1967), 173.

<sup>94</sup> Efiong S. Utuk, "From Wheaton to Lausanne: The Road to Modification of Contemporary Evangelical Mission Theology," *Missiology: An International Review* 14, no. 2 (April 1986): 209-11.

<sup>95</sup> Henry, *Evangelicals at the Brink of Crisis*, 1, 5.

<sup>96</sup> Utuk, "From Wheaton to Lausanne", 212.

event was planned for June 1971, and advertised as a “ring side seat at the second coming” with pre and post Holy Land tours escorted by leading evangelical pastors. Henry selected the topics and speakers, and then had to explain why some speakers and topics were excluded. The speakers were notable—W. Bright, W. Criswell, R. Halvorson, H. Ockenga, W. Smith, J. Stott, and other key evangelical leaders. Conference advertising was provided by *Christianity Today* and *Christian Life*. Henry hailed the conference as “an unprecedented opportunity.”<sup>97</sup> It was attended by fifteen hundred people from thirty-two nations. Evangelical scholars and theologians shared their views on two important questions. Will Jesus return to earth again, and if so, when?

Henry told the conferees that while the speakers may have a few minor differences, they agreed in the essential theological points concerning the end times.<sup>98</sup> The Bible reliably explains God’s moral purpose and man’s destiny. Jesus is the Messianic revelation of God, and His death and resurrection are historical events. The only human hope to escape death is the resurrection of the crucified Jesus, who will be the future judge of the human race. Jesus Christ will return and offers the only human hope to escape the final wrath of God. God will judge the nations. His desire to reestablish Israel does not exempt her from His judgment.

The event was the largest Christian gathering in Israel since statehood celebrations in 1948. Extensive press coverage was provided by *Newsweek*, *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times*. For Henry, there were two highlights at the conference. During opening ceremonies, the Israel Symphony played and Jerome Hines of the Metropolitan Opera sang. After Hines sang, a member of the orchestra rushed to Henry’s side and

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<sup>97</sup> Carl F.H. Henry, “Conference an Unprecedented Opportunity,” *Christian Life*, January 1971, 11.

<sup>98</sup> Carl F.H. Henry, ed., *Prophecy in the Making* (Carol Stream, IL: Creation House, 1971), 12.

tearfully confessed that he was a Christian. A second highlight was the closing service, an outdoor Holy Communion service for the conferees, conducted by Richard Halverson, pastor of Fourth Presbyterian Church in Washington, D.C.<sup>99</sup> The success of the program was to some degree attributable to Henry's skillful leadership.

A 1967 editorial by Henry in which he deplored the lack of evangelical unity and argued for "some visible framework through which to confront the world with the Gospel" launched a major Christian event.<sup>100</sup> The editorial endorsed a recent plea for "a mutual pooling of our collective forces" for evangelism.<sup>101</sup> A favorable reader response followed that precipitated a second editorial by Henry which suggested "a key objective will be to coordinate evangelistic and missionary effort more effectively."<sup>102</sup> Henry, sensing an opportune confluence, solicited Graham's help and called a meeting of seventy evangelical leaders, both clergy and laity, in September 1967 at the Key Bridge Hotel in Virginia. A proposal to explore a transdenominational evangelistic event in 1973, later named Key '73, was agreed. Between 1967 and 1970, five similar meetings were convened. The meetings were facilitated by Henry and Leighton Ford, but Henry's participation was aborted by his exit from the magazine in August 1968.

About 140 to 150 denominations with 200,000 to 250,000 congregations, including 100,000,000 Christians, participated in Key '73.<sup>103</sup> Many parachurch organizations supported Key '73, such as the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, the Navigators, Inter-Varsity, and Young Life. To the left, some denominations were less than

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<sup>99</sup> Henry, *Confessions*, 334-36.

<sup>100</sup> Carl F.H. Henry, "Somehow, Let's Get Together!" *Christianity Today*, June 9, 1967, 24-26.

<sup>101</sup> Carl F.H. Henry, "Concept and Historical Background of Key '73" in *Yesterday, Today, and Forever*, ed. T.A. Raedeke (Washington, DC: Canon, 1974), 2-5.

<sup>102</sup> Carl F.H. Henry, "Evangelicals Seek a Better Way," *Christianity Today*, July 7, 1967, 21.

<sup>103</sup> This estimate is a blend from two sources: Donald McGavran, "The Dividends We Seek," *Christianity Today*, January 19, 1973, 4-5; Donald Bloesch, "Key 73: Pathway to Renewal?" *Christian Century*, January 3, 1973, 9-11.

supportive, such as the Episcopal Church, The United Presbyterian Church, and United Church of God. To the right, certain denominations, such as the Association of Regular Baptists, and organizations, The National Association of Evangelicals, declined to participate due to opposition toward the participation of the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>104</sup>

Henry said the goal of Key '73 was "not a national pep rally aiming to promote church attendance. It is a witness by twice-born men and women to the truth and power of the Word of God in their lives, and an invitation to their townspeople to find Christ Jesus."<sup>105</sup> Later, this was abbreviated for advertising to "Calling our continent to Christ in 1973." The event was organized as a one year, six-phase program, a blend of conservative evangelicalism and liberal ecumenism that included a national media campaign, community based crusades, local Bible study groups, prayer meetings, youth rallies, and distribution of Scripture.<sup>106</sup> Key '73 placed primary emphasis on assisting people to establish a relationship with God, rather than relationships with people or churches. Raedeke, National Director of Key '73 explained this concept,

These two relationships—the vertical and the horizontal—are the keys to success for any evangelism effort. The vertical relationship is the root of evangelism, the beginning without which nothing would happen. The horizontal relationship is the fruit of evangelism. These two, the root and the fruit, when kept in proper perspective and proportion, form a cross. Where there is a cross, there is Christ.<sup>107</sup> In evaluating Key '73, two considerations are essential. First, Key '73 never attained

the requisite national financing. This impaired the national media campaign and the distribution of resources to local congregations. Local congregations had to carry most of the financial burden. Second, evangelistic results varied by geography and theology.

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<sup>104</sup> Bloesch, "Key 73: Pathway to Renewal?" *Christian Century*, January 3, 1973, 9.

<sup>105</sup> Bloesch, "Key 73: Pathway to Renewal?" 9.

<sup>106</sup> W. Newman and W.D'Antonio, "For Christ's Sake: A Study of Key '73 in New England," *Review of Religious Research* 19, no.2 (Winter 1978): 140.

<sup>107</sup> T. A. Raedeke, *Yesterday, Today, and Forever* (Washington, DC: Canon, 1974), 25.

Hence, two national evaluations are offered, the ecumenical and the evangelical view.

*Christian Century* presented the ecumenical view, noting that Key '73 merged the theologically liberal preference for ecumenism with the conservative tendency for evangelism. The magazine made several observations. There was no appreciable growth in church membership. That a canopy could be erected over two disparate theologies was far more significant than the potential addition of new church members. Key '73 should have provided mutual learning experiences for ecumenicals and evangelicals with respect to evangelism. The tragedy was that so few learning experiences actually occurred. The event demonstrated the advantageous relationship of evangelism and social action. Key '73 did not accomplish what many had hoped, nor did do the harm some had feared.<sup>108</sup>

Lindsell summarized the evangelical view and offered several observations. He noted that no person could claim leadership of Key '73, since Key '73 belonged to the churches and congregations. It renewed an interest in the vertical relation of people to God. In the twentieth century too many churches focused on horizontal human relationships. Key '73 demonstrated that biblical unity transcended most theological differences within the evangelical community. It strengthened the bonds between churches and parachurch organizations. It confirmed that the essence of a vibrant church is an evangelistic program that shared the good news of Jesus Christ. Key '73 may not have accomplished all that was hoped, but it accomplished much that was useful.<sup>109</sup>

Key '73 bore the indelible theological fingerprints of Henry, a hearty blend of evangelicalism with a dash of ecumenism, seasoned with civility. While his participation was limited due to unforeseen circumstances at the magazine, he guided the event, at

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<sup>108</sup> James M. Wall, "Key 73 and Constantine," *Christian Century*, January 2-9, 1974, 4-5.

<sup>109</sup> Harold Lindsell, "Key '73—Yesterday" in *Yesterday, Today, and Forever*, ed. T.A. Raedeke (Washington, DC: Canon, 1974), 32-41.



least from conception through birth to adolescence.

Henry was enormously successful as a “network leader,” a facilitator and moderator who gathered people around a table, made them feel comfortable, encouraged them to discuss subjects about which they might disagree, then contributed to the discussion himself, edited the results into a publishable text that educated the public, and elevated future discussions. Thus, Henry was often invited by a sponsoring organization due to his knowledge, wisdom, and integrity to be a discussion leader.

The initial example of Henry’s network leadership was his assemblage of Contributing Editors for *Christianity Today*, particularly the first issue that included F. F. Bruce, J. Stott, G. C. Berkouwer, and B. Ramm. Such skill was also evident at Berlin /66, Jerusalem ’71, and Key ’73. To enhance evangelical collegiality, Henry used his network leadership to organize a series of topical symposiums. He often assumed a contributory role in addition to editing the symposium’s work.<sup>110</sup> Moreover, Henry assisted in the formation of the Institute for Advanced Christian Studies in 1968 which functioned as a think tank for evangelical scholars who sought to relate Christianity to various intellectual disciplines.<sup>111</sup> Subsequently, based on Henry’s network design, the Institute launched a venture with Eerdmans to publish a series of volumes by distinguished scholars on the relation of rational faith and modernity.

Perhaps the most durable example of Henry’s network leadership occurred in May 1989 when The National Association of Evangelicals and Trinity Evangelical Divinity

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<sup>110</sup> From 1957 to 1969, Henry edited seven texts and contributed to four: *Contemporary Evangelical Thought* (Great Neck, NY: Channel, 1957); *Revelation and the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1958); *The Bible Expositor* (Philadelphia: Holman, 1960); *Basic Christian Doctrines* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1962); *Christian Faith and Modern Theology* (New York: Channel, 1964); *Jesus of Nazareth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1966); and *Fundamentals of Faith* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1969).

<sup>111</sup> For the Institute, Henry edited and contributed to *Quest for Reality: Christianity and the Counter Culture* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1973). For a conference at Wheaton on Human Engineering, he edited and contributed to *Horizons of Science: Christian Scholars Speak Out* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978).

School co-sponsored a consultation on Evangelical Affirmations where he served as cochairman with Kantzner. Evangelical scholars, pastors, and leaders were invited to a four-day event that included more than six hundred participants representing a broad spectrum of denominational and theological perspectives within evangelical Christianity. The purpose was to unite evangelicals by calling the Church to vigorous discipleship and evangelism, responsible social action, and sacrificial service. About this conference, Henry wrote, "Those of us who first spoke of the need for such dialogue and declaration amid the present confusion and misconceptions of evangelicalism hardly expected to be involved as platform participants. We sincerely hope that the papers and responses will help fellow Christians... identify what is essential and inessential to an evangelical spiritual testimony in our era of woeful cognitive and ethical confusion." In addition to editing the resulting text, Henry gave the introductory remarks, secured consensus on an extensive evangelical affirmation of faith, and presented a paper.<sup>112</sup>

Some might conclude that Henry experienced two leadership lapses— the loss of the magazine editorship and his inability to bring to fruition a national Christian University. Neither of these situations should be attributed to his leadership, but rather to the imperfect condition of humans and their inability to communicate honestly.<sup>113</sup> Henry's leadership style and skills can be described as highly adaptive. He was respected and admired for his passion, integrity, and logical decision making. He achieved effective leadership results, often in difficult environments. As a Dean, Editor, Conference

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<sup>112</sup> Carl F.H. Henry, "Who are the Evangelicals?" in *Evangelical Affirmations* (Grand Rapids: Academie, 1990), eds. Kenneth. S. Kantzner and Carl F.H. Henry, 17-23, 30-37, 60-94.

<sup>113</sup> Carl F.H. Henry, *Conversations with Carl Henry: Christianity for Today* (Lewiston, NY: Mellen Press, 1986), 122. In this 1983 interview with the magazine, *Religious Broadcasting*, Henry said, Graham "could have been more decisive in avoiding the forfeiture of a great transdenominational evangelical university and in shaping outcomes at *Christianity Today*. Like many others, Graham is too busy to be present when some critical decisions are won or lost." It seems obvious that Henry believed that Graham's leadership, rather than his, contributed to these two unfortunate events.

Chairman, Program Chairman, Society President, etc., the influence of Henry's leadership had a positive bearing on the people and content of the national and international evangelical movement.

## **Theologian and Apologist**

### *Theological Beginnings*

Henry's theological career began with a classical education at Wheaton in philosophy under Gordon Clark, continued with graduate studies in theology and divinity at Wheaton and Northern Baptist, and concluded with doctoral studies at Loyola University and University of Indiana under Jellerna, and Boston University under Brightman in philosophy. He did post-doctoral studies at New College of Edinburgh, Wheaton, and Houghton College.

His early books marked the inception of his illustrious career as a theologian. From 1946 to 1950, Henry's books captured the attention of serious readers. In his 1946 book, Henry demonstrated that the liberals' assumptions concerning modern man—the inevitability of human progress, the inherent goodness of humanity, and the animal nature of humanity—had been proven wrong. These assumptions became popular at the turn of the twentieth-century when people traded theology for psychology, divine revelation for personal experience, and faith in God for faith in humans.<sup>114</sup> Henry believed that the solution to this crisis was the modern mind must be remade by faith engaging culture.

The theological chaos of the mid-century was addressed in detail in Henry's 1948

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<sup>114</sup> Carl F.H. Henry, *Remaking the Modern Mind* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1946), 7-26 and 307.

book.<sup>115</sup> “It is the revelation method, the proclamation of God’s self-disclosure in the written Word and in the living Word Christ Jesus, that alone can resolve the corrosive uncertainty of the confused mid-twentieth century mind.... The pivot point of these tensions is the question of revelation... and the relation of revelation and reason is a crucial concern.” Henry examined the problem systematically—revelation, sin, and Christ. First, “that human knowledge of God is interlocked with the very notion of divine revelation has been an insistence of liberal no less than evangelical theology of the past century.” Yet, “the classic liberal view tended to reduce revelation to merely a functional activity of divine energy, not necessarily conceived in personal terms.”<sup>116</sup> Second, the liberal view was that sin was centered in man’s animal nature, rather than his spiritual being. Man remained essentially good, or progressing toward good.<sup>117</sup> Third, Christ was improperly defined.<sup>118</sup> Christ was, “the best man who ever lived”, or “the supreme religious genius.” Henry’s prescription for these ills was uncomplicated, “The outlook for a vigorous Protestantism in the immediate future is proportionate to the extent to which the Christian message is proclaimed with New Testament purity.”<sup>119</sup>

In 1948, Henry wrote a small and peculiarly titled book, *Notes on the Doctrine of God*.<sup>120</sup> Henry described the book as a collection of footnotes, rather than a full exposition of the doctrine of God. His reason for writing the book was not the atheist; but those who believe God exists, yet live as if there were no God.<sup>121</sup>

Henry contended that the intention of philosophy is to answer the question of God’s

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<sup>115</sup> Carl F.H. Henry, *The Protestant Dilemma: An Analysis of the Current Impasse in Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1948), 38-39.

<sup>116</sup> Henry, *The Protestant Dilemma*, 43-46.

<sup>117</sup> Henry, *The Protestant Dilemma*, 130.

<sup>118</sup> Henry, *The Protestant Dilemma*, 165-70.

<sup>119</sup> Henry, *The Protestant Dilemma*, 213.

<sup>120</sup> Carl F. H. Henry *Notes on the Doctrine of God* (Boston: Wilde, 1948).

<sup>121</sup> Henry *Notes on the Doctrine of God*, 23.

existence affirmatively. Thus in this book, he reviewed the philosophic cases for theism. The cosmological argument claims the finite world sprang forth from an infinite series of casually connected causes, where the initial cause self-existed, was unmoved, and was God. The teleological argument contends that the order of the universe implies the work or design of a "Master Architect," namely God. The moral argument asserts that due to the distinctive nature of humanity, wherein humans feels a moral obligation to do good, the existence of a supreme lawgiver or judge, namely God, is demonstrated.

The rise of empirical thought damaged these philosophic arguments for God because it reduced God to a finite being, and Darwinian thought reduced the need to appeal to God as Creator of the universe. Henry, however, demonstrated that Christian theism is not philosophic. Its "roots are in the self disclosure, a special revelation which breaks into the premises of human thought which man could not discover himself, but which only the divine initiative could be make known to him." Thus, the philosophic case for God is always secondary to the scriptural case because philosophy depends on human reason, while Scripture is the result of divine revelation.<sup>122</sup>

In his 1950 book, Henry suggested that Protestant theology was unstable. Liberalism was disintegrating and Fundamentalism was declining. Neo-orthodoxy was stagnating under the weight of a diversity of views, "The absence of a commitment to a unifying view which compellingly correlates the truths of theology, philosophy, and science is a conspicuous feature of our era."<sup>123</sup> In this transient situation, Henry noted that evangelical theology could restore order, "If we discipline ourselves for the task, in an hour of crisis, when the western world has lost its moorings, who knows but that an

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<sup>122</sup> Henry *Notes on the Doctrine of God*, 42-57.

<sup>123</sup> Carl F. H. Henry, *Fifty Years of Protestant Theology* (Boston: Wilde, 1950), 79.

opportunity will come to us, in the service of Biblical scholarship, to provide active leadership for men who can no longer find their way?"<sup>124</sup>

*Doctrine of Revelation*

Henry completed two theological masterpieces between 1976 and 1990, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, and *Toward a Recovery of Christian Belief: The Rutherford Lectures*. Before beginning an analysis of these two works, two observations are offered. First, the theology contained in these texts does not materially differ from Henry's initial four texts dating from the mid-century. This is not to suggest limited theological growth; it does reflect his commitment to the truth of biblical theism and evangelical faith. Admittedly, in these later works, his theology was expressed with greater clarity and comprehensiveness. Second, reviewers generally found these later works to be comprehensive because Henry set forth the doctrine of God and his revelation within the framework of a world-and-life view, rational since Henry was committed to the idea that Christian theology is a rational task, revelatory because Henry differentiated himself by his dedication to propositional revelation, authoritative since Henry recognized the authority of God and his Word, scholarly because no other introduction to theology demonstrated a greater spectrum of scholarship, and apologetic since Henry offered a vigorous and intelligent assault against the nonevangelical alternatives.<sup>125</sup>

In January 1977, during an interview with the *Washington Post*, Henry was asked, "Why are you writing *God, Revelation and Authority*?" Henry offered three reasons. First, this generation accepts grime when it could have glory. Second, God is not bullish on Communism, the free world, or America. And third, authority preoccupies all areas of

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<sup>124</sup> Henry, *Fifty Years of Protestant Theology*, 94.

<sup>125</sup> Kenneth S. Kantzer, "God, Revelation, and Authority," *Christianity Today*, May 20, 1983, 72.

thought and life today and ultimately turns on the reality of God in his revelation.<sup>126</sup>

A sensible starting point to understand Henry's theology is his theological method. He defines himself as "unapologetically an evangelical presuppositionalist."<sup>127</sup> This is a consequence of his studies under Clark, "To no other contemporary do I owe a profounder debt, than to Gordon Clark.... Since the thirties when he taught me philosophy at Wheaton, I have considered him the peer of evangelical philosophers in identifying the logical inconsistencies that beset nonevangelical alternatives and in exhibiting the intellectual superiority of Christian theism."<sup>128</sup>

Presuppositions or axioms are assumptions which can not be proven antecedently, but which may be verified indirectly by investigating the beliefs subsequently derived from them.<sup>129</sup> Henry's presuppositions may be divided into three broad areas—axioms of logic, argument, and theology.

Henry described in detail at least three axioms of logic that were essential to his theological method. First and foremost is Henry's use of the law of noncontradiction which states that contrary attributes can not attach to a subject at the same time in the same way. Second is his preference for the law of coherence which states that to be valid a set of propositions must be logically consistent. He rejected a more stringent definition of coherence that requires entailment, meaning that a proposition is a logical implicate of the set. Logical consistency may not decisively establish the truth, but it is a potent negative test. Henry believed without noncontradiction and logical consistency, truth can

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<sup>126</sup> Henry, *Conversations with Carl Henry*, 37.

<sup>127</sup> Carl F. H. Henry, *Toward a Recovery of Christian Belief: The Rutherford Lectures* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1990), 42.

<sup>128</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 1:10.

<sup>129</sup> Philosophical definitions noted in this chapter were obtained from *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. <http://plato.stanford.edu/> [accessed on 9/19/10].

not exist because in their absence truth and error are equivalent. Third is the law of the excluded middle which states that an object must be in a state of being or non-being; or equivalently, a proposition must be either true or false. This principle was critical to Henry's understanding of scriptural revelation and its truth.

These laws are universal and necessary, not just because they are logical or true, but because they are ontological laws given by God, not man:

If man made any sense of his own experience, the laws of logic must have intrinsically qualified the *Imago Dei*. From the first, man as man possessed reasoning capabilities and rational discernment on the basis of creation. All distinctively human experience presupposes the law of noncontradiction and the irreducible distinction between truth and error. Man can not repudiate these logical presuppositions without sacrificing the intelligibility of what he says and does and his own mental coherence.<sup>130</sup>

Thus, Henry concluded that logic is an inherent part of the *Imago Dei*. So important were these principles that Henry occasionally referred to them as the "canon of rationality."

Henry chose an axiom of argument that determines the method by which an argument progresses toward a conclusion. Beginning with Origen, Christian theology moved from premise to conclusion by deduction. Deductive logic was normative from Augustine through the Reformation, except for Aquinas. Modern liberal theologians who trace their roots to Schleiermacher favored induction.<sup>131</sup> Induction moves from premise to conclusion by way of empirical evidence. If the evidence is not extensive, the conclusion is expressed as a probabilistic statement. If no evidence exists, the conclusion depends solely on inductive reasoning. With induction, a false conclusion is possible. Henry preferred the assurance of a rational deduction to the possibility of false conclusion.

Henry employed two theological axioms; the first was ontological and the second was

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<sup>130</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 2:126.

<sup>131</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 2:119.



epistemological. The ontological axiom is the existence of the living God, and the epistemological axiom is his divine revelation. These two axioms are implicates of each other. Without the living God, there can be no divine revelation; and without divine revelation, God is unknowable. As a minimalist, Henry asserted that from these axioms of logic, argument, and theology, all Christian doctrines could be derived.<sup>132</sup>

Having selected his presuppositions, Henry turned to the issue of verification of truth. Henry established a standard for verifying the veracity of theological truths. "Divine revelation is the source of all truth, the truth of Christianity included; reason is the instrument for recognizing it; Scripture is its verifying principle; logical consistency is a negative test for truth and coherence a subordinate test."<sup>133</sup> This verification standard utilizes Henry's axioms and should be considered part of his theological method.

The initial volume of Henry's six volume series functions as a prolegomena, explaining presuppositions, method, and the verification standard. The second to fourth volume discuss Henry's fifteen theses and his doctrine of revelation. The fifth and sixth volumes explain Henry's doctrine of God.

Thesis 1: *Revelation is a divinely initiated activity, God's free communication by which he alone turns his personal privacy into a deliberate disclosure of his reality.* Though God is greater than and chronologically prior to his revelation, revelation is the second step toward understanding Henry's theology for two reasons. First, evangelical theology contends if God had chosen to remain hidden, humans could know nothing about God because "the essence of revelation is that God steps out of his hiddenness to disclose what would otherwise remain secret and unknown.... Revelation in the Bible

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<sup>132</sup> Henry, *Toward a Recovery*, 68.

<sup>133</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 1:215.

refers first and foremost to what God himself unveils and that which otherwise would remain concealed.”<sup>134</sup> 1 Corinthians 2:9-10 ESV echoes this point, “What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him—these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit.” Second, the most persistent point of contention for Christianity is the theological basis of divine transcendent revelation. To avoid the centrality of divine revelation leads to the rejection of the evangelical faith at best, or Christianity at worst.

Thesis 2: *Divine revelation is given for human benefit, offering us privileged communication with our creator in the kingdom of God.* Revelation surrounds an event; that is, something happened which has spiritual significance and purpose. It is erroneous to separate event from meaning, or to interpret the event separated from God’s purpose. On this matter, Henry quoted Dodd, “That which happened, as well as what it means, is a part of the revelation... This meaning is declared to be nothing less than the ‘word’ of God, itself transcending history.”<sup>135</sup> Thus, the meaning and the event are intended to benefit humanity because that is God’s purpose. Hebrews 2:6 NRSV, states, “What are humans that you are mindful of them, or mortals, that you care for them?” Yet Henry cautioned, “Precisely because divine revelation is for man’s benefit we dare not obscure its information content, nor mistake God’s disclosure as automatically saving.” Knowledge of God’s revelation is not synonymous with personal salvation; nor is comprehension equivalent to personal appropriation of salvation.<sup>136</sup>

Thesis 3: *Divine revelation does not completely erase God’s transcendent mystery,*

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<sup>134</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 2:20-21.

<sup>135</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, Authority*. 2:38. Quoted in C.H. Dodd, *The Authority of the Bible* (London, UK: Nisbet, 1948), xi.

<sup>136</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 2:38.

*inasmuch as God the Revealer transcends his own revelation.* What God withholds about himself and his ways is beyond our knowing.<sup>137</sup> Deuteronomy 29:29 NIV supports this point, “The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our children forever.” We can not have exhaustive knowledge of God; thus, some portion of the mystery of God remains.

Thesis 4: *The very fact of disclosure by the one living God assures the comprehensive unity of divine revelation.* Deuteronomy 6:4 NIV states “Hear, O Israel: The LORD is our God, the LORD is one.” God’s unity precludes contradictory revelations. To assert another source of divine knowledge—be it another god, reason or tradition—is to devalue and jeopardize the only legitimate source of divine revelation.<sup>138</sup> Other theological distinctions, such as general and special revelation or the progressive nature of revelation from promise to fulfillment, do not subtract from the unity of God’s revelation.

Thesis 5: *Not only the occurrence of divine revelation, but also its very nature, content, and variety are exclusively God’s determination.* Henry mentions Warfield on this point, “In whatever diversity of forms, by means of whatever variety of modes, in whatever distinguishable stages it is given, it is ever the revelation of the One God.”<sup>139</sup> God reveals himself in a variety of ways and such reflects his sovereignty and omnipotence. Hebrews 1:1-2 NRSV agrees, “Long ago, God spoke in many times and various ways to our ancestors...”

Thesis 6: *God’s revelation is uniquely personal both in content and form.* God spoke to Moses, naming himself, as noted in Exodus 3:14 NRSV, “I AM WHO I AM. Thus you

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<sup>137</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 2:47.

<sup>138</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 2:72-73.

<sup>139</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 2:87. Quoted in B.B. Warfield, *Inspiration and the Authority of the Bible* (Phillipsburg, NJ; P&R Publishing, 1980), 96.

shall say to the Israelites, I AM has sent me to you.” Only a person can name himself. Thus, God is a person. In Exodus 13:21-22 NRSV, God is personally present with the Israelites, “The LORD went in front of them in a pillar of cloud by day, to lead them along the way, and in a pillar of fire by night, to give them light, so that they might travel by day and by night. Neither the pillar of cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night left its place in front of the people.” Because God is a living person, he prohibited the Israelites from using dead images to represent his personhood, as noted in Exodus 20:4 NRSV, “You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.” In time, the Messiah of God, the revelation of God, came and lived among humans, as noted in John 1:14 NRSV, “And the Word became flesh and lived among us.” Thus, God’s revelation is personal in form and content because it is a directed communication from the person of God to the people of God for the benefit of God’s people.<sup>140</sup>

*Thesis 7: God reveals himself not only universally in the history of the cosmos and the nations, but also redemptively within this external history in unique saving acts.*

Henry notes that empirical evidence for all past events is, at best, only partial and circumstantial.<sup>141</sup> Thus, redemptive history which is a subset of all human history is in principle investigatable, but is not conclusively verifiable by historical research.

Historical evidence is congruent with revelational truth, but such does elevate history to a source of faith. Evangelical faith is therefore not solely dependent on historical evidence. All history requires an interpretative principle, since it encompasses both a record of an event and its meaning. Redemptive history is a series of divinely inspired events whose

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<sup>140</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 2:211-22

<sup>141</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 2:314.

meaning is given significance in Scripture.<sup>142</sup> This follows because Scripture combines historical testimony to the event with the revelation of its meaning. Since historical research can not offer the theological meaning of the event, it fails as a source of faith. Nevertheless, historical harmony is useful as a subordinate affirmation of faith.

Special revelation, the redemptive acts of God in Jesus Christ and their history recorded in Scripture, presupposes general revelation. If humankind had never sinned, then general revelation would have continued to be sufficient to draw humanity into fellowship with God. Because of sin, human understanding of general revelation became distorted. While it provides knowledge of God, it is insufficient for human salvation. Special revelation remedied this human tragedy by providing saving knowledge of God through the redemptive acts of Jesus Christ. With the exception of some eschatological events, special revelation has ended, while general revelation continues.

*Thesis 8: The climax of God's special revelation is Jesus Christ, the personal incarnation of God in the flesh; in Jesus Christ the source and content of revelation converge and coincide.* Jesus is the Word made flesh per John 1:14, the visible expression of the invisible God per Ephesians 1:15. For some, Jesus was recognized as the Christ because he revised their understanding of Scripture and tradition. First, he subjected the authority of tradition to the superior authority of Scripture. For example, in Matthew 5:21-22 NIV, Jesus said, "You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'Do not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.' But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment." In this case Jesus places his authority above the scribal tradition. Second, Jesus claimed that the Scriptures bore witness to him because he fulfilled the messianic prophecies. For

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<sup>142</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 2:320-21.

example in John 5:39-40 NLT, Jesus, speaking to the scribes, said, “You search the Scriptures because you think they give you eternal life. But the Scriptures point to me! Yet you refuse to come to me to receive this life.” Third, Jesus claimed authority at least equal to the Law and the Scriptures. In Matthew 5:21 Jesus declared “But I tell you,” he bypassed the formula, “the word of the Lord came unto me.” and asserted his right to amend the Law and Scriptures. Fourth, Jesus instituted a new commandment, as noted in John 13:34 RSV, “I give you a new commandment that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.” Fifth, Jesus sent the apostles to proclaim the good news of his life to all. Thus, Jesus’ message transformed people’s hearts and minds so that he could assume his rightful place as the Messiah, the source and content of all special revelation.<sup>143</sup>

Thesis 9: *The mediating agent in all divine revelation is the Eternal Logos—preexistent, incarnate, and now glorified.* “In contemplating the Imago Dei in man... The Johannine Prologue declares man is lighted by the Logos that is logically lighted.”<sup>144</sup> The Logos is the creative Word whereby God created the universe, the source of reason, and the light of understanding that enables humanity to comprehend divine truth.<sup>145</sup> John’s Gospel, 1:9-10 NLT, declares, “The one who is the true light, who gives light to everyone.” The Logos is the mediating agent in general and special revelation. This agent of mediation avoids two misunderstandings: first, that Christ is confined to special revelation; and second, that general revelation is independent of Christ. A link between general and special revelation is maintained through Christ. As pre-incarnate, the Logos was the mediating agent in creation; as incarnate, he is the mediating agent of human

<sup>143</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 3:30-47.

<sup>144</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 2:125-26.

<sup>145</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 3:215.

salvation; and as glorified, the Logos will be the mediating agent at Judgment Day.<sup>146</sup>

Thesis 10: *God's revelation is rational communication conveyed in intelligible ideas and meaningful words, that is, in conceptual-verbal form.* The Bible implies that God established language as a vehicle for intelligible communication, effective fellowship, and communication of the truth.<sup>147</sup> Since "revelation is communication of sharable truths, it consists of sentences, propositions, judgments, and not just concepts"<sup>148</sup> A biblical revelation is a proposition; a verbal statement that is either true or false; a rational declaration containing information capable of belief, doubt, or denial.<sup>149</sup> Exodus 20:1-3 NRSV exhibits these characteristics, "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; you shall have no other gods before me." Revelation is a rational and intelligible communication initiated in the mind and will of God addressed to the human mind.<sup>150</sup> Reason, aided by the *Logos*, illuminates revelation so that humans can differentiate between God and false gods, divine revelation and pseudorevelation, and true and false religion.<sup>151</sup>

Thesis 11: *The Bible is the reservoir and conduit of divine truth.* Henry contended that the first claim to be made concerning the Bible is not its inspiration or even its inerrancy, but its authority.<sup>152</sup> The authority of the Bible rests on its claim to be the Word of God. In Jeremiah 1:4 KJV he claims to speak for God, "Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying..." On this subject, Henry refers to Warfield, "The Church...has held from the beginning that the Bible is the Word of God in such a sense that its words,

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<sup>146</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 3.203-07.

<sup>147</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 3:387.

<sup>148</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 3:429.

<sup>149</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 3:456.

<sup>150</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 3:248.

<sup>151</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 2:126.

<sup>152</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 4:27.

though written by man and bearing indelibly impressed upon them the marks of their human origin, were written, nevertheless, under such an influence of the Holy Ghost as to be the words of God, the adequate expression of His mind and will.”<sup>153</sup>

Henry contended that the Holy Spirit’s inspiration is a logical implicate of the authority of Scripture, and not vice versa. But as 2 Timothy 3:16 obviates, it is Scripture, the writings that are inspired, not the chosen writers, for Henry wrote, “Inspiration is primarily a statement about God’s relationship to the Scripture, and only secondarily about the relationship of God to the writers.”<sup>154</sup> Scripture does not identify the process of inspiration, but consistent evangelical theology precludes the Intuitive Theory where the writer is permanently endowed with a superhuman ability, the Illumination Theory where the writer is given a temporary heightened human ability, the Dynamic Theory where the writer is given God’s ideas and concepts and chooses his own ability to express them, and the Dictation Theory where God dictates the biblical text verbatim.

Inerrancy is then the logical implicate of Divine inspiration. Henry claimed inerrancy per se is not the issue, but its form often is. Henry, following the thinking of his colleague, Everett Harrison, believed that inerrancy was properly deduced from the teaching of Scripture, while its form could be inferred inductively from Scripture.<sup>155</sup> Henry suggested verbal inerrancy has four characteristics: truth attaches not only to the theological and ethical teachings of the Bible, but also to the historical and scientific matters that are an expressed part of those teachings; truth inheres to the very words, not just the ideas or concepts; only the original manuscripts are error free; and copies,

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<sup>153</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 4:159. Quoted in B.B. Warfield, *Inspiration and the Authority of the Bible* (Phillipsburg, NJ; P&R Publishing, 1980), 173

<sup>154</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 4:143.

<sup>155</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 4:176.



translations or paraphrases of the Bible are not error free.<sup>156</sup>

Henry noted the best modern versions of the Bible are infallible.<sup>157</sup> This means they communicate God's purposes; direct humanity to accept God's offer of salvation; are used by the Holy Spirit to demonstrate the destinies of believers and unbelievers; provide full knowledge of salvation, and preserve the rule of faith and conduct.

Henry concluded that the Bible possesses authority. Authority implies inspiration and inspiration implies inerrancy, symbolically stated  $A \rightarrow I \rightarrow E$ . Henry contended that this order of implication holds great theological and logical consequences.

Thesis 12: *The Holy Spirit superintends the communication of divine revelation, first, by inspiring the prophetic and apostolic writers, and second, by illuminating and interpreting the scripturally given Word of God.* This is affirmed in 2 Peter 1:20-21 NKJ, "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." Henry's doctrine of inspiration encompasses the following features: the text is a deposit of divinely inspired language; inspiration is consistent with the socio-historical characteristics of the writers; inspiration did not end the fallibility of the writers in their daily lives; the writers were divinely chosen to communicate God's words; the information communicated by the writers was beyond the normal reach and resources of all human beings; the writers were merely vehicles for the true author of the Bible, God; and all Scripture is inspired, both ideas and words.<sup>158</sup>

The Holy Spirit's initial role of inspiration should be distinguished from his continuing role of illumination. To understand Scripture, the aid of the Holy Spirit is

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<sup>156</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 4:205-10.

<sup>157</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 4:243-55.

<sup>158</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 4:143-61.

required. By the Spirit's illumination, the readers and hearers are aided in their understanding of particular passages, but Scripture is illuminated, not the readers and hearers. This expository ministry does not involve communication of a new truth.<sup>159</sup>

This view respects Scripture's authority and the Spirit's ministry within the church.

Thesis 13: *The bestower of spiritual life, the Holy Spirit, enables individuals to appropriate God's revelation savingly, and thereby attests the redemptive power of the revealed truth of God in the personal experience of reborn sinners.* Henry noted that the faith which stops with intellectual appreciation of the facts about God is nothing more than the faith of demons.<sup>160</sup> Knowledge of God can not be equated with salvation, as Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 5:17 NLT, "This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!" The Holy Spirit is the agent of regeneration for the penitent whereby the sinner is reborn and sanctified. Thus, the enscripturated Word of God reveals the enfleshed Word of God to the redeemed sinner.

Thesis 14: *The church approximates the kingdom of God in miniature; as such she is to mirror to each successive generation the power and joy of the appropriated realities of divine revelation.* "For Christians, talk is no more a substitute for action than faith is a substitute for works. The starving cannot survive on recipes for bread, nor the sick be cured by swallowing paper prescriptions."<sup>161</sup> Nothing damages the integrity of the Church more than observing that she is financially supported by those who hear the Word, but seldom do it, as James wrote in 2:15-17 NLT, "Suppose you see a brother who needs food or clothing, and you say, 'Be well and God bless you; stay warm and eat

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<sup>159</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 4:258-59.

<sup>160</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 4:496.

<sup>161</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 4:547-48.

well’—but then don’t give that person any food or clothing. What good does that do? It isn’t enough just to have faith. Faith that doesn’t show itself by good deeds is no faith at all—it is dead and useless.” “Theology cannot be a shield to escape social responsibility; neither can it be used to rationalize worldly aspirations.”<sup>162</sup>

Thesis 15: *The self-manifesting God will unveil his glory in a crowing revelation of power and judgment; at the consummation of the ages, God will vindicate righteousness and justice, finally subdue and subordinate evil, and bring into being a new heaven and earth.* Henry concluded his doctrine of revelation with an eschatological thesis describing the end of the age. Henry was a premillennialist; and in accordance with Scripture, he acknowledged that one day God will withdraw his offer of pardon to those who repent and accept Christ Jesus as Savior. While there is much speculation concerning the eschaton, there is agreement that a righteous judgment followed by a new heaven and earth will occur.<sup>163</sup> But for the believer, there will be joy, as the old hymn affirms, “When we all get to heaven, what a day of rejoicing that will be!”

Summarizing Henry’s doctrine of revelation is a Herculean task. As a presuppositionalist, he clearly stated his axioms of theology, logic, argument and verification. On the basis of these, a theology of revelation was artfully crafted. Henry suggested that by way of the *Imago Dei*, the self-existent God created a universal communication conduit between himself and humanity that is based on rational thought forms and languages. God discloses his presence and purpose solely for the benefit of humanity. The original form of revelation was sufficient to draw humans into fellowship with God. But due to sin, human understanding of revelation was corrupted and special

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<sup>162</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 4:577.

<sup>163</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 2:16.

revelation was needed through the Living Word and Written Word of God to redeem humanity. Human understanding of revelation is grounded in the Logos, the mind of God in Christ. Humanity can verify divine truth with Scripture illuminated by the Logos. The Church is a part of God's Kingdom that temporarily exists to continue the ministry of Christ Jesus until his return to judge all people and nations. Then perfect justice will prevail, the old will pass away, and a new heaven and earth will be established.

### *Doctrine of God*

All revelation ultimately and necessarily points to God. Thus in volumes five and six, Henry moves from epistemological to ontological considerations, the existence and nature of the self-disclosing God. Henry contended that the revealed God might be visualized as one who stands, stoops, and stays. The God who stands without aid is the sovereign God whose existence is self-contained. The God who stoops humbles himself to redeem sinners through the incarnate *Logos* who died on the cross in a holy covenantal love. The God who stays supports humanity and governs eternally in providence to consummate his eschatological plan for creation.<sup>164</sup>

Using these three images, Henry organized his doctrine of God based on three principles that affirm the existence of God. First, he is the God who *is*, i.e. the God who stands. Henry noted, "He is God who *is*, not merely the God who comes or God who becomes....Neither our cognitive belief nor our trusting response constitutes his *is*-ness; rather, his *is*-ness legitimizes our belief and requires our response. The whole of theology aims to say *nothing less* and *nothing more* than God *is*."<sup>165</sup> This is reflected in Romans 1:19-20 RSV, "For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God

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<sup>164</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 5:9-19.

<sup>165</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 5.41.

has shown it to them. Ever since the creation of the world his eternal power and divine nature... have been understood and seen through the things he has made.” Second, God came and became. Henry wrote, “The link between the being of God and God’s coming and becoming is the promised and expected Messiah.”<sup>166</sup> This is Johannine and stated in John 1:1 and 14 NIV, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God....The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.” This is the God who stoops to live among us. Third, God lives eternally. “Only God who stays, God who prevails, determines and assures the eschatological outcomes.”<sup>167</sup> This is the God who stays. The palmist expressed God’s timelessness in Psalm. 90:2 NKJV, “Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever You had formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.”

Henry rejected all philosophical approaches to God’s attributes because negation compromises God’s perfections, analogy describes the infinite with the finite, causality limits the comprehensiveness of divine attributes, intuition relies solely on a cognitive relationship with God, and existentialism depends entirely upon subjective human initiative. Evangelical theological accepts only those descriptions of divine attributes that arises from God’s Word. A biblical approach to divine attributes must satisfy two requirements: it must preserve God’s independence from his creation—God’s transcendence; and it must assure human knowledge of God—God’s immanence.

Having previously discussed God’s independence or aseity via the image of the God who stands, Henry continued the discussion of divine attributes with a declaration that evangelical theology insists on the simplicity of God. His implication is that God is not a

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<sup>166</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 5:58.

<sup>167</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 6:492.

collection of attributes or a divisible compound. Henry quoted Bertocci on this point who wrote God “never was, nor will ever be, ontologically divisible.”<sup>168</sup> Human understanding of divine attributes rests upon the revealed characteristics of God. Such understanding is imperfect because human it is based upon the apparent effect of God’s attributes, rather than the inherent essence of the attribute. Since God is a unified being, each attribute is inclusive of all attributes. Each attribute supports every other attribute, such that there is no conflict among them. No divine attribute is subordinated to another, and all attributes are equal and indistinguishable within the simplicity of his nature.<sup>169</sup>

Based on John 4:24, God is spirit. Thus, Henry asserted that God is a primordial being, who is invisible, immaterial, self-conscious, and self-determinate. Self-consciousness is the capability of making one’s personhood an object of rational thought, and being aware of that thought. Self-determination is the capability of free will.<sup>170</sup>

God is infinite in an objective perfect and not an indefinite sense. This means that God is incapable of qualitative or quantitative increase or diminution. When applied to his attributes, each is perfect, as stated in Matthew 5:48 NRSV, “Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.” None can be limited by external restriction; each can be limited only by God’s free will. The finite, humanity, is able to comprehend the infinite, God, only because God, the creator, continues to reveal himself to his creation.<sup>171</sup>

With regard to God’s eternal nature, Henry declared, “We had better freely admit that the Bible contains no express declaration about God’s timeless eternity or about time’s

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<sup>168</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 5:131. Quoted in Peter Bertocci, *The Person God Is* (New York; Humanities Press, 1970), 219.

<sup>169</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 5:127-32

<sup>170</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 5:214-18.

<sup>171</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 5:219-34.

pervading the nature of God.”<sup>172</sup> Yet, Henry was comfortable with the consequence of omnipresence. “Evangelical orthodoxy affirms that God has a vital and stable personal relationship with the entire space-time universe.”<sup>173</sup> Henry resolved this apparent dilemma by juxtaposing another divine attribute, omniscience, with timelessness. He assumed Strong’s definition of omniscience—God’s perfect knowledge of all things which are objects of knowledge whether they are actual or possible, and whether they are past, present, or future. While the Bible never uses the term “omniscient,” God is described to be all-knowing, as in Acts of the Apostles 15:18 KJV, “Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.” God knows the thoughts and purposes of human hearts and minds. God’s knowledge is more than comprehensive; it is unlimited by time. Thus by deduction, omniscience implies timelessness; and it would be pointless to assert divine omniscience, if divine timelessness were denied.<sup>174</sup>

The living God is immutable, one who will not change in nature, purpose, or promise. Since God is perfect, any change produces imperfection. The consistency of God’s purpose or promise is emphasized in Malachi 3:6 NLT, “I am the LORD, and I do not change. That is why you descendants of Jacob are not already destroyed,” and in Hebrews 13:8 NLT, “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.”

The term “omnipotence” does not occur in the Bible, but the term “Almighty” does. In the Old Testament, the Hebrew noun, *שׁוּדַי*, El Shaddai, meaning one to who nature bows and does his will, is translated as the Almighty, and in the New Testament, the Greek noun, *παντοκράτωρ*, pantokrator, meaning ruler of all, is translated as the Almighty. Genesis 17:1 NLT states, “When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD

<sup>172</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 5:249.

<sup>173</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 5:260.

<sup>174</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 5:268-70.

appeared to him and said, “I am El-Shaddai—God Almighty,” and Revelation 1:8 NLT states, “the Lord God says, “I am the one who is, who always was, and who is still to come—the Almighty One.” The self-disclosed God of the Bible is omnipotent, but humanity should not impute to God a human conception of power, only that power which God has revealed. Thus, God’s power is at least sufficient to create and sustain the universe and to overcome death. Greater power has not yet been revealed. God’s omnipotence is always exercised in concert with his other attributes.<sup>175</sup>

Henry has discussed eight attributes belonging solely to God—independence, infinitude, immutability, omniscience, omnipotence, simplicity, spirituality, and timelessness. Yet there may be confusion because omnipresence is absent and infinitude is present in Henry’s list of attributes. Is this simply a rose by a different name? The answer appears to be a complicated negative. Henry is comfortable with the consequence of omnipresence—God is equally, totally, and simultaneously present everywhere.

Henry perhaps assumed omnipresence is the consequence of other attributes. He noted that omniscience has been described as “the omnipresence of cognition.”<sup>176</sup> The inference is that God can not possess comprehensive cognitive knowledge without a pervasive presence. Subject to this minor aside, Henry’s presentation of divine attributes corresponds to the traditional evangelical arrangement.

Henry lays aside the discussion of divine moral attributes, while startling the reader with a chapter entitled *God’s Intellectual Attributes*. He begins with an unpretentious declaration. God is the author of all truth, whatever God thinks, wills, or speaks is truth. Thus, truth depends upon God’s sovereignty. God’s upholds the truth; he establishes and

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<sup>175</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 5:307-30.

<sup>176</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 5:277.



preserves it. Thus, God is the source of truth and the ground of all knowledge.<sup>177</sup>

For Henry, like Augustine, truth consists of propositions, rather than ideas. God's omniscience consists of his knowledge of propositions and their interrelationships. Humans possess truth, only if their propositions conform to God's truth. Sans the antecedent activity of the *Logos*, human knowledge of God or truth is impossible.

God is rational and the source of all rationality. Christianity asserts its case for the ontological status of reason, not simply on speculation, but on the self-revelation of the rational Creator-God. The world was created and existed before the creation of humanity. Since truth is part of God's nature, reason was present prior the appearance of humans. A creation that is implicitly rational demonstrates God's rationality and supports the ontological significance of reason. In the end, Henry does not argue for another metaphysical attribute. He merely broadened the meaning of omniscience to include the traits of truth and rationality.

### *Apologist*

An enduring feature of Henry's legacy is his defense of the Christian faith, his frequent and critical engagement of various beliefs that depart from orthodox evangelical theology. As a Christian apologist, he critiqued opposing theologies, while maintaining personal relationships with theologians of all stripes. Thus, he was able to interview Barth, Brunner, Bultmann, Pannenburg, and their leading exponents. Henry believed that a Christian theologian has a two-fold task, to proclaim the superiority of biblical theism and to demonstrate the inferiority of opposing views.<sup>178</sup> Henry wrote, "If

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<sup>177</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 5:334-36.

<sup>178</sup> Henry's method, instilled in him by Clark, is apagogic. An apagogic approach attempts to demonstrate the futility of an opposing system by revealing a logical inconsistency, or demonstrating the opposing system is unable to cope, or copes less successfully, with the vicissitudes of life.

theology rests on intelligible divine disclosure and seeks to present truth in systematic form, then it most surely contains structured arguments against competing views, and apologetics cannot be contrasted...as wholly different and distinct from theology.”<sup>179</sup>

An analysis of the Person Index of *God, Revelation, and Authority* indicates Henry devoted about one-quarter of it to apologetics. While few theologians escaped Henry’s critical attention, a detailed analysis suggests that three men were subject to considerable comment—Barth, Brunner, and Bultmann. But Barth’s theology earned most of Henry’s serious interest. This reflects two historic realities; Barth was the towering theologian of the first-half of the twentieth century and his theology was a threat to evangelicalism. Henry’s analysis of Barth’s theology is therefore illustrative of his apologetic approach.

While Henry agreed with Barth on some theological points, there were three major disagreements—divine revelation, human reason, and biblical authority. Barth emphasized the transcendence of God to such an extent that God appears unknowable. He wrote, “even after revelation, man cannot know God, for He is always the unknown God.”<sup>180</sup> Barth claimed that divine revelation was not revealed truth, but a concentrated interpersonal divine-human confrontation that elicits obedient faith. There is no revelation, only a personal subjective, saving encounter; thus, his epistemology precluded the communication of divine truth. Barth assumed that faith actualized human cognition of God. Faith made knowledge possible. Thus, God remains hidden until “he causes the miracle to happen...by which our words become true descriptions of Himself.”<sup>181</sup>

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<sup>179</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 1:244.

<sup>180</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 3:277. Quoted in Karl Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans* (New York: Oxford, 1968), 33.

<sup>181</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 5:369. Quoted in Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, vol. 2, bk.1 (New York: T+T Clark, 2010), 228.

Henry believed that Barth's problem was an ill-advised differentiation between revelation and propositional truth; and failure to understand that regeneration is a response to a previously known divine truth that the sinner in his unregenerate state has ignored.<sup>182</sup>

With respect to human reason, Barth's theology suggests that after the Fall, humanity had no rational point of contact with God. "The image of God is not only...with the exception of some remnants ruined, but annihilated....Man's capacity for God, however it may be with his humanity and personality, has really been lost."<sup>183</sup> Barth believed an anthropological transformation occurred at the moment of conversion when God grants a cognitive faculty to the regenerate sinner. Henry affirmed the biblical position that humanity receives this faculty at creation. This God-given rational capacity is part of the *Imago Dei* through which the *Logos* enables human understanding. It appears that Barth denied any doctrine of creation that endowed humanity with the capacity to reason by which humanity can communicate with or know God. Similarly, Barth denied revelation by which God reveals himself to the mind of man through history and nature. Therefore prior to conversion, reason was given a subordinate role in the knowledge of God by Barth. To suggest that humans gains congruity and correspondence of divine truth as a result of a personal, subjective act of faith implies that truth is created by faith. Biblical theology holds that faith brings the miracle of justification and initiates sanctification in the believer.<sup>184</sup> Efficacious reasoning and understanding follow sanctification due to the presence of the Holy Spirit.

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<sup>182</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 3:468-69.

<sup>183</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 1:397. Quoted in Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, vol., bk.1, (New York: T+T Clark, 2010), 273.

<sup>184</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 5:369.

The third major disagreement was the authority of Scripture. Barth held that Scripture was not objectively God's Word, merely a human witness to divine events. It is fallible with respect to historical, religious, and theological teachings, and the originals are not error free. He wrote, "If we are serious about the true humanity of the Bible, we obviously cannot attribute to the Bible as such the capacity to reveal God to us."<sup>185</sup> Yet, Scripture could become the Word of God when the reader or hearer encountered the Holy Spirit. Barth's difficulty began with two contradictory positions—the Bible is a fallible human record and the Bible is the Word of God.<sup>186</sup> This was avoidable had Barth adhered to the law of noncontradiction. Henry concluded that Barth's theology was flawed because of erroneous epistemology, defective anthropology, contradictory presuppositions, and inconsistencies with Scripture.

### *Criticisms and Compliments*

Henry's literary style was subject to minor criticism. His style was uneven, and his sentence structure could be long and complex. He could be elegant, but periodically his writing became painful scholarly detail. A college degree is a prerequisite to assure comprehension; yet, an MA in philosophy is often necessary.<sup>187</sup>

Henry's theology attracted various criticisms. To gain a better perspective of these criticisms, several sources, written over a twenty-year period, were reviewed.<sup>188</sup> The criticisms are arranged by subject and frequency.

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<sup>185</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 4:198. Quoted in Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, vol. 1, bk.2 (New York: T+T Clark, 2010), 506-07.

<sup>186</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 4:197-200.

<sup>187</sup> Kantzer, "God, Revelation, and Authority", 72.

<sup>188</sup> The following sources were consulted. Bob E. Patterson, *Carl F.H. Henry* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1983); Gabriel Fackre, "Carl F. H. Henry," in *A Handbook of Christian Theologians*, eds. Dean G. Peerman and Martin E. Marty (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1984); Gabriel Fackre, "Carl Henry's Reasoned Apologetic," *Theology Today* vol.41, no.2, July 1984; Chad Owen Brand, "Is Carl Henry a Modernist?" *Trinity Journal* 20, no.1, March 1999; R. A. Mohler, Carl F.H. Henry, in *Theologians in the Baptist Tradition*, Timothy George and D.S. Dockery, eds., (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2001).

Patterson, Mohler, and Fackre note that Henry's six volume set is not a systematic theology. A systematic theology presents eight topics—prolegomenon, God, creation, man, Christ, Holy Spirit, salvation, and the church. Mohler wrote that Henry's "achievement will stand as an encyclopedic prolegomenon.... The lack of systematic expression has left several theological issues untouched or underdeveloped.... Little attention was given to the Holy Spirit... The glaring omission is ecclesiology."<sup>189</sup>

At the heart of this criticism is the conjecture that Henry should have written a systematic theology. Henry's focus was God, revelation and authority since he believed twentieth century culture had compromised the authority of God and the significance of divine revelation. His subject order and emphasis were prescribed by the theological needs of society, rather than adherence to an academic standard. Second, in order to call attention to theologies where insidious assumptions had corrupted the doctrines of God, revelation, and authority, Henry devoted a significant effort to methodology and presuppositions. Third, while focusing on God, revelations, and authority, Henry did introduce other systematic topics. Fourth, Henry deemed it necessary to undertake an apologetic defense of evangelic theology, and such has proven valuable. While the criticism is true; its appropriateness is questionable.

Mohler and Patterson remark that Henry's academic methodology limits reader appeal. Mohler contends that critics "have lamented his scholarly approach" in particular with respect to epistemological matters.<sup>190</sup> One such critic was Abraham, who wrote,

Henry, as we have seen, was one of the key architects of modern orthodoxy and he is generally regarded as the dean of evangelical theologians. Yet, the climax of his work is deeply disappointing.... What we have... is over three thousand pages of

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<sup>189</sup> Mohler, Carl F.H. Henry, in *Theologians in the Baptist Tradition*, Timothy George and D.S. Dockery, eds., (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2001), 292.

<sup>190</sup> Mohler, "Carl F.H. Henry", 291.

turgid scholasticism. Readers swirl around in a sea of names who are either called in defense as witnesses to the truth or carefully worked over as inconsistent heretics. A dead and barren orthodoxy decked out in a magnificent display of learning is presented as the riches of Christian faith. Even the educated readers will soon find themselves suffering from either boredom or indigestion.<sup>191</sup>

Evidently, Abraham does not understand the nature of an apologetic defense and the requisite need to support the truth in order to negate a heresy. It is acknowledged that some of Henry's philosophical and theological arguments are intricate and require a substantial level of intellectual detail to comprehend. The presences of such complexities reflect his intellectual gifts, rather than academic arrogance. The criticism contains a modicum of truth, and the reader is well-advised to keep a large standard dictionary and a theological dictionary within easy reach.

Patterson indicates that some felt Henry's majestic, but reserve, image of God conflicted with the traditional portrayal of a tolerant, familial, and subjective God.<sup>192</sup> Henry earnestly believed that the American church had domesticated God by emphasizing God's immanence at the expense of his transcendence. Moreover, there was an ignorance of God's holy, righteous, and just love. God's love was visualized as a brotherly tolerance without any need for self-sacrifice; and thus, it had deteriorated into an expression of emotional sentimentality. The criticism is valid, but not appropriate because Henry's intent was to describe God in a balanced biblical manner.

The most severe criticisms were Henry's support for a God who reveals himself solely in a Euclidean fashion and alleged fixation with the importance of human reason, while diminishing the role of the Holy Spirit. Bloesch and others objected to the creative role that Henry apparently assigned to reason, particularly to reason prior to faith.

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<sup>191</sup> William J. Abraham, *The Coming Great Revival: Recovering the Full Evangelical Tradition* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1984), 36-37.

<sup>192</sup> Patterson, *Carl F.H. Henry*, 165.

Bloesch preferred to assume that the Holy Spirit illuminated the mind so that revelation is not at the disposal of reason. “Reason is always the servant and never the master or determiner of revelation.” Grace accomplishes what reason can not; but once the intellect is saved, it is granted the correct foundation on which to build. Revelation, not reason, must be the final authority; if the truth of revelation must be first tested by reason, then reason is superior to revelation.<sup>193</sup>

To properly address this major criticism, several points must be considered. First, the apostles instructed believers to test everything, for example, 1 John 4:1NIV, “Do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God...” Second, Henry wrote, as a presupposition, “reason is a divinely fashion instrument for recognizing the truth; it is not a creative source of truth.” The Fall influenced human will more perversely than human intellect. Reason remained functional; it enables humans to arrive at the truth, without altering the content of truth. Humans may choose not to know God, but they are capable of understanding the available evidence to reach a rational conclusion concerning his existence. But knowledge of God’s revelation must be appropriated by faith in order for salvation to occur.<sup>194</sup> Third, as Brand noted Henry’s presuppositions and resulting theses “insulate him from falling prey to traditional forms of autonomous Rationalism.”<sup>195</sup> In particular, see Henry’s theses 9, 12, and 13 in this chapter. Fourth, Henry cautions evangelicals not to go beyond biblical limits, by rigidly insisting that all divine disclosure is propositional, and thereby reconstructing biblical revelation in a rationalistic manner. Nevertheless, “evangelicals need not tremble

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<sup>193</sup> Patterson, *Carl F.H. Henry*, 164-67.

<sup>194</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 1:225-27.

<sup>195</sup> Chad Owen Brand, “Is Carl Henry a Modernist?” *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 8, no.4 (Winter 2004): 50. [http://www.sbts.edu/resources/files/2010/08/sbjt\\_084\\_win04-brand.pdf](http://www.sbts.edu/resources/files/2010/08/sbjt_084_win04-brand.pdf) [accessed October 24, 2010].

whenever others charge us with rationalism, since not every meaning of that term is objectionable; those who glory in the irrational, superrational or subrational ought to be challenged head-on.”<sup>196</sup>

In his zeal to formulate the case, Henry was conceivably guilty of improper emphasis between reason and the *Logos* of God. But Henry’s distinction between rational and rationalistic should not go unnoticed. If reason is the servant of man, then man is rational and able to be the servant of God. One who is rationalistic, meaning superrational, serves his mind and can not serve the Lord. The criticism’s validity rests solely on the critic’s subjective appraisal of Henry’s emphasis.

The above criticisms were negligible in volume compared to the high praise that surrounded the three publishing dates of the series between 1976 and 1984. Volumes One and Two won awards from *Eternity Magazine* for best books in the religious field. Upon completion of the set, the Evangelical Publishers Association awarded Henry its Gold Medallion for theology. He received a Presidential commendation, and was named “leading theologian of the nation’s growing evangelical flank,” by *Time* in 1977.<sup>197</sup>

Mohler said, “Henry emerged as a major influence in twentieth-century theology. His influence, through his voluminous writings and public exposures, shaped the evangelical movement to a degree unmatched by any other theologian of the period.”<sup>198</sup> Fackre noted, “If the twentieth century evangelical renaissance in North America has produced a Michelangelo, that exemplar is surely Henry. Premier theologian, key figure in its formative institutions, chief public interpreter of its ways and critic of its wanderings, this

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<sup>196</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 3:480.

<sup>197</sup> Purdy, “Carl F. H. Henry”, 275.

<sup>198</sup> Mohler, “Carl F.H. Henry”, 291.



renaissance man has left his mark on an epoch.”<sup>199</sup> Patterson wrote that he was “the prime interpreter of evangelical theology, one of its leading theoreticians...and unofficial spokesman for the entire tradition.”<sup>200</sup> The conclusion is manifest: as a theologian and apologist, Henry influenced and shaped the evangelical movement by formulating its theological foundation and fortifying it with an apologetic defense.

### Summing Up

The purpose of this Chapter is to analyze and evaluate the professional life of Carl Henry. Three conclusions are offered. The first conclusion follows from two diverse comments. First, an American evangelical described Henry to a British journalist as “a very profound theological journalist,” a complement to Henry’s theological insights and journalistic instincts that made him a passionate communicator.<sup>201</sup> Second, “few ever thought of Henry, the great theologian, as an evangelist. But he was an evangelist who would go to extraordinary lengths to proclaim the message of the Bible.”<sup>202</sup>

These two comments illustrate Henry’s professional agility, his ability to transition easily between differing roles and contexts. Each skill acquired contributed to and enriched his existing array of skills. Henry never contemplated whether he was a better journalist or evangelist. Rather, he rejoiced that because he was a journalist, he became a better evangelist; and because he was an evangelist, he became a better theologian. Thus,

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<sup>199</sup> Fackre, “Carl F.H. Henry”, 583.

<sup>200</sup> Patterson, *Carl F. H. Henry*, 131.

<sup>201</sup> Carl R. Trueman, “Admiring the Sistine Chapel: Reflection on Carl Henry’s *God, Revelation, and Authority*,” *Themelios* 25, no.2 (2000):48.[http://www.theologicalstudies.org.uk/article\\_henry\\_trueman.html](http://www.theologicalstudies.org.uk/article_henry_trueman.html) [accessed 10/23/10].

<sup>202</sup> Timothy George, “Inventing Evangelicalism,” *Christianity Today*, March 1, 2004, 48.

the first conclusion is Henry regarded God as his employer, and he allowed God to determine the context and role in which he was to use his divinely inspired gifts.

This principle is evident in Henry's 1978 reflection on his tragic exit from the magazine. "I knew that God had a purpose....For the moment it seemed difficult to see how this could be a door to an equally useful ministry....God will bring what glorifies Him and is good for His servant, and through his servant what best serves his fellow man....Looking back today, I would have to say that the outlines for *God, Revelation, and Authority* took shape at Cambridge. I sank myself deeply into theology in a way I could not have done along with the magazine responsibility...and that has been my central interest since."<sup>203</sup> Thus, the journalist did become a better theologian.

Following acceptance of God's call to Christian service, Henry invested considerable effort and energy preparing for an unspecified ministry. This involved seeking an education at Wheaton, Northern Baptist, and Boston University, and pursuing employment as a journalist, pastor, teacher, and author. During that process, God presented Henry with several opportunities to contemplate his life-purpose. On these occasions, Henry reached the same conclusion—to provide leadership that would shape and influence the evangelical movement. Henry was always able to see beyond the boundaries of his immediate employment to focus on his life-purpose. The second conclusion is Henry allowed God time to equip, clarify, and define his life-purpose.

The third conclusion arises from the principal concern of this chapter—the extent to which Henry accomplished his life-purpose of providing leadership that shaped and influenced the evangelical movement. Five professional roles were analyzed—Teacher and Educator, Ethicist and Philosopher, Journalist and Author, Pastor and Leader, and

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<sup>203</sup> Chandler, "Carl F. H. Henry: Towering Theologian," 33-36.

Theologian and Apologist. In each context, Henry entered a profession in a small role, but then the Teacher eventually became an Educator, the Ethicist became a Philosopher, the Pastor a Leader, and the Theologian an Apologist. Henry gained wide recognition through excellence that permitted his role and influence to expand. Henry's professional achievements from 1947 to 2003 and the testimonies of pundits of various degrees of learning and leanings have been presented. A British commentator wrote, "Henry is perhaps *the* central intellectual figure in American evangelicalism this century....He is above all a man of big vision, with a keen sense for what is and is not important."<sup>204</sup>

The material assembled in this chapter demonstrates that Henry was able to shape, influence and direct evangelicalism in a profound, productive, positive, and personal manner. His leadership was recognized by many from several different perspectives. Yet, Henry would argue that if he accomplished his life-purpose, then such was done by God, since Henry only accepted God's call, allowed God to equip him, and attempted to accomplish God's will.

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<sup>204</sup> Trueman, "Admiring the Sistine Chapel," 48.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSION

#### Research Question and Hypothesis

Research Question: what is the relationship between “revival” and “renewal of the mind?” Research Hypothesis: the relationship between “revival” and “renewal of the mind” can be defined biblically, theologically, and historically.

#### A Biblical Perspective

From a biblical perspective, the mind includes two essential elements: its nature and its consequent functions of thinking, understanding, judging, and perceiving.<sup>1</sup> In the synoptic Gospels, humanity is commanded “to love God with all your mind”; hence, the mind has a spiritual task.<sup>2</sup> Since “to love” is an action, it is achieved by the mind’s functions, rather than its nature. At creation, the mind was part of the *Imago Dei*, the image and likeness of God. After sin entered God’s creation through humanity’s rebellion against God, the nature of the mind was corrupted; and consequently, the mind periodically malfunctioned. Thus, humanity is no longer able to discern God’s truths or his will with regularity or certainty. As a result of this unsavory situation, humanity sank deeper into sin and the separation between a holy God and sinful humanity increased.

Nevertheless, God is faithful to his people, and he sent prophets to forewarn them of

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<sup>1</sup> W. Bauer, W. Arndt, and W. Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: Chicago Press: 1979), s.vv. “διάνοια” and “νοῦς.”

<sup>2</sup> Mt 22:37, Mk 12:30, and Lk 10:27.

the wrath that awaited them, if they continued to sin. Periodically, he sent prophets to encourage the people to humble themselves, pray, repent, and live godly lives. Under these conditions, the Sovereign God heard the prayers of the people and restored his favor to them and their land.<sup>3</sup> Such became a time of revival and refreshment.<sup>4</sup>

Yet following every revival, humanity returned to their sinful ways. Finally, God sent Jeremiah to announce a new covenant, a covenant that would be written on the minds of humanity, rather than merely etched on stone.<sup>5</sup> The new covenant would encourage obedience through love of God and neighbor, rather than require it by legal conformity of behavior, since disobedience would be unthinkable to one on whose mind the law was etched.<sup>6</sup>

The new covenant was established, affirmed, and sealed by the death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ. With the new covenant came an eternal remedy for the sin-infected human mind. The Apostle Paul wrote to the Christians in Rome and told them that their minds need not be conformed to this sinful world, but could be spiritually transformed and renewed by the Holy Spirit.<sup>7</sup> In so doing, they could again discern the will of God, his good, pleasing, and perfect will, and their minds could then begin a transformational journey that would eventually restore the very *Imago Dei*.

Thus, the biblical perspective suggests the relationship between “revival” and “renewal” is transformative because God uses revival as a means to renew the mind.

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<sup>3</sup> 2 Chr 7:14.

<sup>4</sup> Acts 3:19-20.

<sup>5</sup> Jer 31:33 and Heb 10:16.

<sup>6</sup> Carl F.H. Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority* (Waco, TX: Word, 1979), 4:524.

<sup>7</sup> Rom 12:1-2.

## A Theological Perspective

The Church grappled with three different theological understandings of the relationship of faith, a proxy for revival, and reason, a proxy for the mind. Historically the earliest and currently the least widely held assumption is Tertullian's view that faith and reason are diametrically opposed because faith is a divine gift and reason is a product of human labor. Hence, faith is beyond reason; faith is sufficient for certitude; and faith is primary and complete. "I believe," largely recaps this view. Currently, this view has been generally dismissed, except for the Barthian or neo-orthodox school of theology.

At the other extreme is the Thomistic view which holds that reason is at least coequal to faith, or superior to it. Reason, or natural revelation, can discern some divine truths, such as God's existence; but faith, supernatural revelation, is required to discern other divine truths, such as the Virgin Birth or Holy Trinity. Yet, reason is required to prepare the mind to accept the supernatural revelation of faith. Thus, reason is primary; reason precedes faith; and reason completes faith. "I understand in order to believe," essentially recaps this view. This has been the primary epistemological assumption of the Roman Catholic Church for more than five hundred years.

Between these two extremes is the Augustinian-Anselmian view that recognizes the priority of faith associated with the Tertullian view and the benefit of reason to faith associated with the Thomistic view. As Augustine wrote, "Understanding is the reward of faith....Believe that you might understand."<sup>8</sup> To which Anselm would later add,

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<sup>8</sup> Augustine, *Homilies on the Gospel of John*, Chapter VII.14-18. <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf107.iii.xxx.htm> [accessed June 8, 2011].

<sup>9</sup> Anselm, *Proslogium*, Chapter 1. <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/anselm-proslogium.html> [accessed June 9, 2011].

“Faith must precede understanding.”<sup>9</sup> Thus, faith precedes understanding; yet understanding complements and completes faith. “I believe in order to understand,” basically summarizes this view.

This was the epistemological assumption for most of the leaders of the Reformation, and it was prevalent in the American Protestant Church. John Wesley wrote, “I am for faith to perfect my reason, that by the Spirit of God not putting out the eyes of my understanding, but enlightening them more and more, I may 'be ready to give' a clear scriptural 'answer to every man that asketh' me 'a reason of the hope that is in' me.”<sup>10</sup> A more modern commentator, Os Guinness, writes, “Christianity invites people to an examined faith. Although a Christian should believe simply, he should not “simply believe.”<sup>11</sup> Henry, a descendant of Reformation theology supported the Augustinian-Anselmian view, wrote, ““The revelation of the living God is the precondition for human understanding; it supplies the framework and the corrective for rational reason.”<sup>12</sup>

As to the relationship of faith and reason, the theological material indicates that faith precedes understanding, but understanding complements and completes faith. Theologically, faith, meaning revival, is a precondition for renewal of the mind.

### **An Historical Perspective**

Revivals are broad-scale movements of the Holy Spirit that renew the spiritual vitality

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<sup>10</sup> Thomas Jackson, *The Works of John Wesley*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. CD-ROM (Franklin, TN: Providence House, 1995), vol. 2, 217.

<sup>11</sup> Os Guinness, *In Two Minds: The Dilemma of Doubt* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1976), 31

<sup>12</sup> Henry, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, 1:1, 183.

of the church, community, or denomination and her people and foster mission and evangelism. An awakening is a series of revivals sustained on a larger geographic scale over a longer time dimension. This is consistent with the biblical material.

America has experienced four Great Awakenings. The first began in the 1720s in the Mid-Atlantic colonies and concluded under the leadership of Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield in the 1740s. The second began in the revival camp meetings on the western frontier of Kentucky and Tennessee about 1800 and ended in the 1830s under the leadership of Charles Finney in Western New York and Ohio. The third Great Awakening began in 1857 via large city prayer meetings for businessmen, and concluded with the evangelistic ministries of D. L. Moody and Billy Sunday at the beginning of the twentieth century. The Fourth Great Awakening, led by Harold John Ockenga, Carl Henry, and Billy Graham, began in the late 1940s and ended in the early 1970s.<sup>13</sup>

The historical perspective suggests that revivals and their attendant spiritual benefits of forgiveness of sins, new creation in Christ, and transformation of mind through sanctification have continued by God's grace in the post-apostolic period.

*Carl Henry*

1. Carl Henry influenced people and shaped organizations within the evangelical movement through his leadership because he demonstrated a consistent, sustained, comprehensive vision of evangelicalism based on an accurate, coherent, and responsible

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<sup>13</sup> Historians would generally agree that Ockenga, Henry, and Graham were the primary leaders of the awakening. But even Graham recalled at least two other leaders. Graham described Henrietta Mears as the woman who, other than his mother and wife, had the most marked spiritual influence on him. For information concerning this renowned Christian educator and leader, see <http://www.ccel.us/mears.toc.html> [accessed Dec. 14, 2011]. Graham, recognizing the awakening had an international dimension, noted that John Stott was then the most respected evangelical clergyman in the world. This reflected Stott's student mission work in Britain, North America, Australia, and New Zealand; his work with the International Evangelism Congress at Lausanne and Manila; his founding of the Fellowship of European Evangelical Theologians; and his widely read and translated books. For more information concerning this international evangelical leader, see <http://www.johnstottmemorial.org/life-passion/> [accessed Dec. 14, 2011].



theology. His vision was consistent because its basic shape remained unchanged despite ever-changing cultural and political forces; it was sustained because it was pursued over a fifty year period; and it was comprehensive because it encompassed a world-life view. The foundation of his vision was a theology that was biblically accurate, methodologically coherent, and socially responsible.<sup>14</sup> Henry's theological values created his vision that directed his leadership of the evangelical movement.

Henry understood his life-purpose of shaping and influencing the evangelical movement through leadership as a God given mission. He labored at that purpose in a variety of contexts through five sets of roles—Teacher and Educator, Ethicist and Philosopher, Journalist and Author, Pastor and Leader, and Theologian and Apologist. This conclusion is warranted based on material presented in Chapters Three and Four.

2. In a eulogy for Henry, Duane Litfin suggested that future biographers may need to employ a different paradigm to explain Henry's life.<sup>15</sup> Litfin suggested Henry's life might best be described by assuming the "two-task model" presented by Charles Malik in his address entitled *The Two Tasks*, for the dedication of the Graham Center at Wheaton in 1980.<sup>16</sup> Malik identified the two tasks as saving souls and saving minds, but emphasized that evangelization must always takes precedence over education.<sup>17</sup>

This paradigm seems particularly appropriate for two reasons. First, given knowledge of Henry's professional roles, each role can reasonably be assigned to one of the two tasks. For example, as a teacher, educator, ethicist, philosopher, or journalist,

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<sup>14</sup> Paul House, "Remaking the Modern Mind: Revising Carl Henry's Theological Vision" *The Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* vol.8, no.4 (Winter 2004):4-5.

<sup>15</sup> Memorial Service at <http://www.henrycenter.org/carlhenr.php> [accessed on October 20, 2009].

<sup>16</sup> Charles Malik, "The Other Side of Evangelism," *Christianity Today*, November 11, 1980, 38-40; Charles Malik, *The Two Tasks in The Two Tasks of the Christian Scholar*, eds. William L. Craig and Paul M. Gould (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007), 55-66.

<sup>17</sup> Malik, "The Other Side of Evangelism," 39-40.

Henry's roles could arguably be classified as primarily redeeming minds. Conversely, when functioning as an author, pastor, leader, theologian or apologist, Henry's roles might be classified as primarily redeeming souls. While there may be debate about these classifications, few would claim any of Henry's endeavors were beyond the boundaries of these two tasks. Second, in a similar fashion, Henry's massive bibliography may be categorized with a parallel result. Thus, for professional roles and published works, it may be reasonably agreed that little lies beyond the boundaries of this paradigm.

Several examples illustrate the applicability of this paradigm. The revivalism of the late 1940s was a joy for Henry. But he was not a distant evangelistic cheerleader, he believed everyone, whether professor or policeman, was called to be a "soul winner." So Henry preached citywide revivals in Chicago and for the Youth for Christ campaigns in the larger cities of the Midwest. In Pasadena, he organized the annual Easter Sunrise service at the Rose Bowl. For Henry, personal evangelism was part of the "vigor of the new evangelicalism."<sup>18</sup> When a new professor was hired at Trinity Divinity, he received a note from Henry, "I wish you well at Trinity... Don't forget—if I may exhort a colleague to witness one-on-one to others about the Savior who met with Nicodemus and the woman at the well."<sup>19</sup> Finally, during an interview near the end of his life, Henry was asked what one thing young pastors should remember. Henry replied, "Tell them never to forget the glory of a soul saved."<sup>20</sup> These examples demonstrate that Henry recognized the priority of saving souls in his diverse roles and contexts.

With regard to the second task of saving minds, Malik commented that if it is the will

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<sup>18</sup> Joel S. Carpenter, *Revive Us Again: The Reawakening of American Fundamentalism* (New York: Oxford, 1997).

<sup>19</sup> C. Ben Mitchell, "Testimonies to a Theologian," *The Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 8, no.4 (Winter 2004): 91.

<sup>20</sup> House, "Remaking the Modern Mind," 5.

of the Holy Spirit that the soul receives attention, then certainly it is not his will that the mind be neglected.<sup>21</sup> Similarly, Henry wrote that Christianity speaks powerfully not only at the frontier of faith, but also at the zenith of cognition. Christianity must be willing to hear the other side, to allow the atheist, the relativist, the humanist, and the other neo-pagans to plead their flawed intellectual case. “Evangelicals must do more than crusade for evangelistic decisions, as appropriate as they may be in time and place.” Pagan minds must be engaged, confronted, and disputed, “until their axioms are unmasked by the eternal Light of Truth.”<sup>22</sup> “If we capture humanity’s minds and establish just social structures, yet neglect the evangelization of the world, we will fail humanity where it needs help most of all.”<sup>23</sup> “Christianity does not demand the cessation of reason, but lifts reason beyond the confinement of an intellect limited by finitude and darkened by sin.”<sup>24</sup> In these several quotes, separated by forty years, Henry demonstrated his life-long commitment to the redemption of the mind and his understanding that redemption of the mind is of secondary importance to the redemption of the soul.

From the application of the “two-task model” to Henry’s life, additional insights are apparent. It is observed that Henry’s leadership was used by the Holy Spirit to achieve redemptive results, the salvation of souls and minds. It may be concluded that Henry’s theological values created his vision that directed his leadership of the evangelical movement, and the Holy Spirit used his leadership to achieve the salvation of souls and minds. This emphasizes divine use of divine gifts through cooperative humanity for kingdom glory, rather than active human use of divine gifts for kingdom glory.

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<sup>21</sup> Malik, “The Other Side of Evangelism,” 39-40.

<sup>22</sup> Carl Henry, *Twilight of a Great Civilization: The Drift toward Neo-Paganism* (Westchester, IL: Crossway, 1988), 140-41.

<sup>23</sup> Henry, *Twilight*, 20.

<sup>24</sup> Carl F.H. Henry, *Remaking the Modern Mind* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1948), 223.

3. That redemption of the soul takes precedence over redemption of the mind is logically and spiritually consistent with the two previous conclusions: faith precedes understanding and revival precedes renewal of the mind. These three conclusions emphasize that the soul or heart can not believe, or at least will not believe for long, that which the mind will not entertain or can not conceive. Reason complements and completes faith by strengthening its foundation in the heart. Therefore, these three conclusions display logical coherence and consistency.

Reason completes faith because it permits comprehension of God's personal revelation. Without understanding the significance of God's personal revelation of faith, faith can not be apprehended. Reason complements faith because it judges the evidence supporting the revelation of faith. The evidence presented must be appropriate in nature and adequate in quantity. Faith without evidence is either irrational or impossible.<sup>25</sup>

4. Under Clark's influence at Wheaton, Henry undertook a serious and sustained integration of biblical faith and reason. Henry refused to divorce rigorous research from personal piety.<sup>26</sup> Henry never "compartmentalized" his faith, but fully engaged culture with his integrated faith. In this manner, he was an integrated person and led an integrated life. Thus, his faith was not a private or personal matter, and he was prepared to speak both intimately and intellectually of the "hope that lived within him."

Hence, Henry returned to the historic examples of intellectual evangelical leaders, such as Jonathan Edwards, John Wesley and Charles Finney, all of whom possessed superior intellects and lived integrated lives. In some ways, Henry could be viewed as a

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<sup>25</sup> Tim McConnel, The Old Princeton Apologetics: Common Sense or Reformed? *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 26, no.4 (December 2003): 658n41.

<sup>26</sup> House, "Remaking the Modern Mind," 6.

herald for Marsden's book *The Outrageous Idea of Christian Scholarship*.<sup>27</sup> The theme of which is faith and scholarship are compatible, and therefore, the Christian scholar can lead an integrated life.<sup>28</sup> The accomplishments achieved by Henry were possible only because he lived an integrated life.

5. The testimonies and tributes following Henry's death were filled with caricatures of his role in the evangelical movement or simplified characterizations of his relationships with Billy Graham and Harold John Ockenga. Typical of these comments are references that Henry was the "brains behind the National Association of Evangelicals, Fuller Seminary, *Christianity Today*, and much more." Ockenga was the "mover and shaker of neo-evangelicalism," and Graham was the "front man" while Henry was the "inside man" for the movement.<sup>29</sup> Such characterizations do a disservice to the individuals and God's equipping grace. With respect to Billy Graham, he was a graduate of a respected college, a noted author, a respected teacher, and President of a small Bible college. With respect to Henry, he was a gifted preacher, often preaching to crowds of fifty thousand, and his sermons were regularly published as "best of the year." Graham and Henry lived the integrated life; they were hardly one dimensional people. Henry was more than the intellectual leader of the evangelical movement, his theological values became the foundation of a vision by which he directed the evangelical movement, shaped its institutions, and influenced its people.<sup>30</sup> Concurrently, the Holy Spirit used his leadership to redeemed souls and minds.

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<sup>27</sup> George Marsden, *The Outrageous Idea of Christian Scholarship* (Oxford: Oxford University, 1997).

<sup>28</sup> Paul M. Gould, "The Two Tasks: The Fully Integrated Life of the Christian Scholar," in *The Two Tasks of the Christian Scholar*, eds. William L. Craig and Paul M. Gould (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007), 23.

<sup>29</sup> Timothy George, "Testimonies to a Theologian," *The Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 8, no.4 (Winter 2004): 85.

<sup>30</sup> George, "Testimonies to a Theologian," 85.

6. The life and thoughts of Carl Henry provided the vehicle in which the relationship of “revival” and “renewal of the mind” could be explored. As hypothesized, this relationship can be defined biblically, theologically, and historically. Henry personally encountered or experienced “revival” and “renewal of the mind” in each of these dimensions. Henry, the biblical scholar, understood and taught that revival was but one means by which God renews and transforms the human mind. Henry, the preeminent evangelical theologian, experienced the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit that followed his personal revelation of faith; and thus, he taught the Augustinian-Anselmian approach that while faith precedes understanding, understanding complements and completes faith. Henry became a historical figure when he accepted God’s call to direct, shape, and influence the Fourth Great Awakening. And in so doing, he experienced the joy of saving souls and saving minds for the kingdom of God.

7. “Revival” and “renewal of the mind” are related in several ways. First, and most important, both are acts of grace that are conferred on an obedient, but otherwise unworthy, child of the Sovereign God by the Holy Spirit. Second, “revival” always precedes “renewal of the mind.” This is a spiritual and logical reality because faith lifts reason beyond the boundary of a mind darkened by sin and connects it with the infinite dimensions of the Divine Eternity. Third, this relationship has been experienced in human history by every generation since the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

## **A Personal Reflection**

Henry was a twentieth century voice, leading and influencing a mid-twentieth century movement. Yet, this writer is a twenty-first century evangelical Christian who encountered Henry at the end of the twentieth century. Henry invigorated this writer's passion and understanding in three critical areas of the Christian faith—revelation, evangelism, and the engagement of culture.

Henry demonstrated that revelation is more than God seeking fellowship with his creation. It is a divine act that communicates love and truth to humanity, in order that humanity may become obedient stewards of his creation and enjoy it. And yet the beauty of God's revelation is the mystery of his being remains. Henry's theology recognizes the necessity of divine mystery. Some evangelicals wrongly assume that all divine actions are subject or susceptible to human understanding and explanation. Conversely, to admit to the necessity of sacred mystery is to reject evangelicalism and join Catholicism.

A second point of theological refreshment is Henry's basic approach to theology. It is not systematic theology, but biblical theology in approach and structure because of its explicit dependence on Scripture. Biblical theology expresses the view that the unity of the Bible is best understood in the Augustinian phrase, "The Old is in the New revealed; the New is in the Old concealed." That which is read explicitly in the New Testament is seen only implicitly in the Old Testament. The two Testaments proclaim the same message, but from different perspectives—one points forward in anticipation, and the other declares an accomplishment. Biblical theologians eventually paraphrased the Augustinian concept—one covenant, wherein the Old Testament represents the promise

and the New Testament represents the fulfillment. Henry's title for his theological magnum opus, *God, Revelation, and Authority*, caused this writer to conclude that it also expresses the unity of the Bible in an extraordinary fashion. The Bible begins with God and then describes his continuous self-revelation. The Bible finally concludes with God's triumphant authority over death, sin and evil. Thus, the Bible represents one continuous narrative of God, his revelation, and his authority.

A second area of reflection encompassed personal evangelism which Henry described as "the new vigor of evangelicalism." It may be difficult to make an objective case in this matter, but this writer's subjective view is that there was a change in evangelism and its motivation when evangelicalism emerged from Fundamentalism. Evangelism appeared to become more personal, less impersonal. It was relationally driven, both socially and spiritually. It was not driven by an avoidance of "hell and brimstone," nor was it regarded as "soul wining," "a salvation", or "a profession of faith." It was welcoming, warm, and joyful. This new evangelism attempted to reflect the joy that Luke notes in Chapter Fifteen of his Gospel on the return of the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the lost son. Henry and Graham were the architects of this personal evangelistic approach because of their equal concern for the "here" and the "hereafter."

A third area of personal reflection involved Henry's approach to and engagement of culture. Henry seemed to reject any singular approach to culture as presented by H. Richard Niebuhr in his famous text of 1951, *Christ and Culture*, and initially engaged most elements of culture. He then carefully rejected some portions of culture, for example communism; placed Christ above other culture, for example consumerism; allowed the church and pluralism to coexist in paradox; and attempted to transform other



culture, for example education and democracy. The problem as Henry defined it was not what to do about culture in the church, but what to do about the church in culture. This seemed to be a Wesleyan approach—reject the pub, but use the music of the pub to create hymns to glorify God. Some evangelicals appear to believe that a monolithic approach to culture is theologically required. Henry demonstrates that a more reasoned approach produces better results for the kingdom.

While each of these topics created an epiphany for this writer, their combined effect suggests that Henry's voice has continuing implications for the twenty-first century evangelical community.

## APPENDIX

### HISTORICAL TIMELINE

Figure 2 illustrates the chronology of people and events discussed in Chapters Two, Three, and Four for the period from 1800 to 2000. The first entries noted in red at the top are the Second, Third, and Fourth Great Evangelical Awakenings. Next, noted in green are some events, people, and institutions that influenced the Protestant church in America.

A brief summary of Protestantism, detailed in green, is presented in the middle of Figure 2. Evangelicalism as inherited from the colonial church continued unabated until a small Holiness Movement separated at mid-nineteenth century. Near the end of that century, evangelicals began to divide into liberal and conservative elements. The conservatives eventually became Fundamentalists, while the liberals became progressives in the twentieth century. A major break occurred when the Pentecostals separated at the beginning of the twentieth century. The Holiness Movement and Pentecostals largely aligned themselves with the Fundamentalists. Finally, the neo-evangelicals emerged near the mid-twentieth century.

The central characters of this thesis-project, Ockenga, Graham, and Henry, are shown in blue in the third quartile of Figure 2, with an emphasis on the common events of their lives. Lastly, in the lower quartile of the pages, some significant world events are detailed in purple. A dot ( • ) represents an event's date and an underline ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) represents an event's duration.

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1800	1810	1820	1830	1840	1850
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Second Great Awakening

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•Princeton Seminary     Spiritualism rises, new churches formed

Charles Finney, 1820-50, Father of Modern Revivalism

EVANGELICALISM

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•Paine's *Age of Reason*

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**Figure 2. Historical Timeline for Chapters Two, Three and Four.**

*Sources:* Michael D. Tam, *Bible Timelines*, CD-ROM, (Big Fork, MT: Hermeneutika Bible Research Software, 1999); Chapters Two, Three and Four.

1850	1860	1870	1880	1890	1900
<u>Third Great Awakening</u>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•J. Lamphier, prayer meetings •Salvation Army</li> </ul>					
<u>D.L. Moody, Evangelist, 1860-99</u>			<u>Billy Sunday, 1890-1930</u>		
<u>J. Nelson Darby, Dispensationalism, 1850-82</u>					
<u>Charles Hodge, Princeton theologian, 1851-78</u>			<u>B.B. Warfield, Princeton</u>		
			<u>Liberals gain control of higher education</u>		
			<u>Liberals separate from evangelicals</u>		
<u>EVANGELICALISM</u>			<u>Conservatives separate from evangelicals</u>		
<u>Holiness Movement separates from evangelicals</u>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Darwin's <u>Civil War + Reconstruction</u>      <u>Secularization of Higher Education</u></li> </ul>					
<i>Origin of the Species</i>					

Figure 2 continued.

1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950
<u>Fourth Awakening</u>					
• <u>The Fundamentals</u>		•Westminster Seminary formed			
<u>Evangelist, 1890-1930</u>		•Old Fashion Revival Hour, Ch. Fuller			
<u>J. Gresham Machem, fights Liberalism 1914-37</u>		•Youth for Christ			
<u>theologian, 1887-1921</u>		•H. Emerson Fosdick's sermon			
• <u>Scofield Bible</u>		• <u>Machem's, Christianity and Liberalism</u>			
<u>Liberalism becomes neo-orthodoxy</u>					
				<u>Neo-Evangelicalism founded</u>	
<u>Conservatives become Fundamentalists</u>					
<u>Pentecostals separate from Fundamentalists and Holiness Movement</u>					
<u>Holiness movement continues</u>					
Harold J. Ockenga				Pres. Fuller Sem. '47	
<u>Born '05</u>	<u>Taylor '27</u>	<u>Park St. Pastor '36</u>		<u>Pres. NAE, '42</u>	
	BA Westminster '30	Pitt, Phd, '39			
	Billy Graham	Revival	Bob	Youth for	
	<u>Born '18</u>	<u>Conversion '34</u>	<u>Jones '37</u>	<u>Christ '46-48</u>	
			BA Wheaton '43		
Carl Henry	News Ed. Wheaton	Serves	Fuller Prof. '47		
<u>Born '13</u>	<u>'29-33</u>	<u>'35-40</u>	<u>NAE '42</u>	<u>Uneasy Consc. of</u>	
		BA, MA		<u>Mod. Fund. '47</u>	
<u>World War I</u>	•Scopes Trail		<u>World War II</u>	<u>Cold War begins</u>	
			<u>Great Depression</u>		

Figure 2 continued.

1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	
<u>Fourth Great Awakening</u>						
•Inerrancy Crisis Fuller '62 •Gordon-Conwell est. '69						
•Trinity Div. est.'63 •Prison Fellow.'76						
•CBN '60 •Trinity Broad.'73 •Focus on the Family'77						
•Lausanne Covenant '74 •Manila Manifesto'89						
•Battle for the Bible, Lindsell'78						
<u>Neo-orthodox ultimately become Liberals or Progressives</u>						
<u>Neo-Evangelicals become Evangelicals</u>						
<u>Fundamentalists become Traditionalists or the New Right</u>						
<u>Pentecostalism continues</u>						
<u>Holiness Movement continues</u>						
Hosts	Chairs	Fires	Founds			
NE	Christianity	Henry	Gordon-	Died'85		
Crusade'50	Today'56	'68	Conwell'69			
Leads	Hires Henry	Appts. Henry	Graham Center	Graham	Died	
NE	at CT'56	Chair Berlin /66	at Wheaton'80	Library '07	'12	
Crusade'50		With Henry est. Key'73				
Assists	Editor	Chairs	Teaches at	Joins World	God, Rev. Henry	Died
LA	CT'56	Berlin/66	East. Baptist	Vision'74	Authority Center	'03
Crus'49-50			+ Trinity'69-74	'76-83	Trinity'87	
Brown v	•JFK shot	•MLK shot	•Roe v Wade	Persian Gulf Wars		
Bd of Edu						

**Figure 2. Historical Timeline for Chapters Two, Three and Four.**

Sources: Michael D. Tam, *Bible Timelines*, CD-ROM, (Big Fork, MT: Hermeneutika Bible Research Software, 1999); and Chapters Two, Three and Four.

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